GANDHARVAS & KINNARAS
IN
INDIAN ICONOGRAPHY

BY
Vidyaratna R. S. PANCHAMUKHI, M. A.,
Director, Kannada Research Institute, Dharwar.

KANNADA RESEARCH INSTITUTE, DHARWAR
1951

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PREFACE

The writing of a memoir on the Indian demi-gods, the *Gandharvas and Kinnaras* was suggested to me in 1939 when I had prepared a note on "The Gandharvas and Kinnaras in Indian Iconography" for the Tenth All-India Oriental Conference held at Tirupati in March, 1940. Shri. O. C. Gangoly, the Sectional President of the Conference appreciated the treatment and suggested that a fuller study would be a good contribution to the subject. The late Rao Bahadur K. N. Dikshit, M.A., the then Director General of Archaeology in India assigned this subject to me in the same year and issued general instructions to all the Superintendents under him to supply me with the photo-prints that I may require for my study. But in the meanwhile, I was appointed the Director of Kannada Research Institute, newly started by the Government of Bombay at Dharwar in 1939, and owing to the heavy responsibility of starting research work in history, archaeology and Kannada literature etc. in the new area, the study and writing of the memoir had to be deferred till the middle of 1945, when I began to gather the necessary material for the work on hand.

The Museum attached to the Kannada Research Institute contains some fine specimens of the Gandharva and Kinnara images and this afforded me a further stimulus to study their iconography in greater details and embody the results in this brochure. I undertook tours to important centres of ancient Karnatak sculptural art like Badami, Pattadkal, Aihole, Lakkuṇḍi etc., and made a comparative study of these icons with those found elsewhere and described in the works on Indian Sculpture and Painting.

The subject under treatment has not been dealt with in full details in any works on iconography. Though the deities treated here hold a minor rank in the Hindu, Buddhist and Jaina pantheons, their appearance in every temple, *Stūpa* or *Basadi* is inevitable either as a retinue of the principal god or as separate

images. The position and functions and the multiple variety of delineation both in sculpture and painting deserve to be studied by every student of the history of sculptural art and it is the object of this *memoir* to make some contribution to the study of this subject, from the iconographical and historical points of view.

While writing the Preface, I came across A. B. Keith's paper 'A New explanation of the Gandharvas' published in the Journal of the Indian Society of Oriental Art, Vol, V pp. 32 ff. and 'Vedic Gandharva and Pali Gandhabba' etc. by O. H. De A. Wijesekera and "the philosophical import of Vedic Yaksha and Pali Yakkha" by the same author published in the University of Ceylon Review, Vol. III and Vol. I respectively. Though the subject is treated in these articles on the background of comparative mythology, nothing is said in them about the iconography of these demigods. I have briefly touched upon this point on p. 48 f. below agreeing to the similarity in the conception of Vedic *Gandharva* and Avestan *Gandhareva* with Greek *Kentauros*, but differing from Prof. Przyluski's connecting Vedic Gandharva with Gardabha = ass. The status and function of the Gandharvas in the Buddhist and Jain pantheons are briefly narrated in chapter II.

I cannot but refer here to the brilliant note of Shri O. C. Gangoly on "A Gupta pillar at the Museum in Benares" published in Oriental Art Vol. III, No, 2 (1950) to which my attention was kindly drawn by the author. His significant remarks "Indeed, the application of sculptural ornamentation to structural forms is one of the basic characteristics of Indian architecture from early times" are perfectly true in regard to the representations of the Gandharva, Kinnara, Yaksha, Nāga and similar semi-divine beings carved on the beams and pillars of ancient temples. They have survived to the present day even in the modern domestic architecture where the symbolic ornamentations of the pillars and beams can be traced to the full-size images of the fabulous semi-divine animals such as Nāga, Gandharva, Kinnara, Kīrtimukha which at one time adorned

the sanctuaries of the Vedic Gods, the Buddhist *viharas* and the Jain *Basadis*. I have not dwelt on this point in the book, as the discussion would naturally land into the study of evolution of the principles of Temple architecture, which is beyond the scope of this pamphlet.

I must record my sincerest gratitude to the late Rao Bahadur K. N. Dikshit, for all the help he rendered me in my work, but for which this brochure would not have been completed at all. The help of the several publications and literary works which I have consulted in the preparation of the book deserves to be acknowledged with thanks. My thanks are also due to the Department of Archaeology in India for the supply of photographs of the Gandharva and Kinnara images which have been used for illustration in the book.

The brochure which was to be published by the Department of Archaeology could not be published by that body due to the intervention of the world-war and the consequent control on the printing and paper facilities. In the meanwhile, it was considered advisable to publish this pamphlet under the auspices of the Kannada Research Institute and I now place this before the scholars and students of iconography. I am conscious of the shortcomings in this publication which are partly due to the want of a good Reference Library at Dharwar and the non-availability of some valuable works on Indian art which are either out of print or out of stock. In spite of this, I have tried to do some justice to the subject and I hope that the treatment will prove an incentive to the more intensive study of Indian art and iconography in its different aspects, against the back-ground of regional and provincial influences.

I am thankful to Shri O. C. Gangoly a well-known art critic of Calcutta for adding an introduction to the book. My thanks are also due to the Superintendent, Photo-zinco Office, Poona, for the excellent blocks prepared for this brochure, and to the Manager of the Karnatak Printing Works, Dharwar for the neat and speedy printing of this book at a short notice.

KANNADA RESEARCH INSTITUTE,
DHARWAR

R. S. Panchamukhi
Director of Kannada Research.

INTRODUCTION

I am happy to add a few words of introduction to this interesting *Memoir* of Vidyaratna R. S. Panchamukhi. Ten years ago I had the pleasure of listening to his original paper, which has now been expanded at my suggestion.

The Kinnaras and Gandharvas and other fictitious creatures in Indian Mythology,—curious creations of fertile imagination,—occur continuously in Indian Plastic Art — throughout its un-interrupted history. As very piquant and spicy elements—in Sculptural and Pictorial illustrations—they have been demanding a scholary enquiry—into their history, both plastic and literary—which a learned scholar has now provided for the benefit of all students of Indian Art and Mythology.

The subject has from time to time received some attention from scholars European and Indian, but never exhaustively dealt with. Our author does not claim an exhaustive treatment of the subject—but his references to literary texts are fairly complete, if not exhaustive.

The earliest study on the subject we owe to H. Luders, a great German scholar. Recently, the topic has been partially covered by an Indian scholar Mr. H. R. Kapadia: (Gigantic Fabulous Animals in Jaina Literature—'*New Indian Antiquary*' April-June 1946).

I am quite sure the present study will inspire other scholars to dive deeper into the topic and all subsequent scholars will certainly feel grateful to our author for his erudite presentation of the literary data. Perhaps, the references to the Buddhist texts bearing on the topic are not as complete as one should expect —as many of the Buddhist monuments embody interesting plastic representations of Kinnaras and Gandharvas very closely related to *Divyāvadāna* and other Buddhist Texts. Relevent references in the *Kathā—Sarit sāgara* could have been usefully utilized. It is hoped these minor blemishes would be corrected in a subsequent edition.

Evidently for saving expenses—the publishers have not been able to provide as many illustrations as the topic damanded. The lack of adequate illustrations has seriously hampered the author's excellent presentation. This imperfection may also be covered in a subsequent edition. We have a very excellent model—as to how such topics could be treated–in Coomarswamy's marvellous monograph on YAKSHAS, and it is hoped the next edition of this Memoir will fulfil all our expectations. The topic also demands a comparison with analogous treatment of Fictitious and Symbolic creatures in European Art.

What *Vidyaratna* Panchamukhi has actually given us is a valuable aid to our understanding of the *motifs* which enrich the beauty and expressiveness of Indian Art.

2, ASHUTOSH MUKHERJI ROAD,
Elgin Road Post Office
CALCUTTA—20 INDIA
23rd April, 1951.

O. C. Gangoly

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28. Śāśvatakōśa.
29. Śabdakalpadruma.

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32. Mānasāra.
33. Rūpāvaliya.
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INTRODUCTION

The human mind has an inborn tendency to adore the sublime and the best in Nature. Even the conception of an *omnipotent and omniscient God who pervades throughout the* universe both animate and inanimate, does not preclude the worship of the deified powers of nature. Worship of Gods in various forms is common to almost all ancient cultures in the past and the Hindu culture which is an admixture of different types of culture from the Vedic times down to the classical age is not an exception to this. From the earliest phase of Indian civilization as made out from the extant literary evidences namely the Vedas and the auxiliary lores, and from the latest archæological discoveries at Mohenjo Daro and Harappa, it is possible to infer that worship of divinities, some times by visible representations has been a striking feature of Indian religion. References to temples and images of gods and godlings are met with in abundance particularly in later Vedic literature, and the relics unearthed in India's prehistoric sites at Mohenjo Daro and Harappa lead to the surmise that temples and temple architecture were known to the authors of the Indus civilization. The *terra cotta* figurines of the Mother goddess, figures of gods on the seals and sealings and the stone *liṅga* and other antiquities have led the scholars to characterise the type of the civilization represented by them as highly developed both temporally and spiritually. During the vast interval of time from the close of the Indus period (*circa* 2500 B. C.) to the historic period of the Buddha (*circa* 500 B. C.), what particular forces combined to mould the special typ of the Hindu culture, there are no means to understand. Whatever be

the lines of development, the Indian mind was trained to interpret divinity in terms of things temporal and as a corollary of this, temples and images began to be worshipped by all theistic religions in India. The Hindu pantheon with one supreme God as an Invincible All-powerful Divinity admitted numerous minor deities under Him, that represented different cultural forces, or a harmonious building of an uniform homogeneous civilization called the Aryan culture. Among these minor deities, the *Gandharvas* and *Kinnaras* play a significant part in Indian temples. It is the object of this *Memoir* to study the position and functions of these demi-gods in the Hindu pantheon, to note their iconographical features from the extant sculptures and paintings and to insititure a comparison between the Hindu, Buddhist and Jaina icons of these godlings classified uuder chronological periods of Indian sculptural art, so that their true character as a piece of sculptural art-production may be set forth in a true perspective.

CHAPTER I

THE STATUS AND FUNCTIONS OF THE GANDHARVAS AND KINNARAS, IN LITERATURE

The Vedic Literature contains numerous references to *Gandharva* and *Kinnara* as performers of specific functions which are explained in detail in the Pauranic literature. They also throw light on their status and position in the Vedic Pantheon. The dictum that the *Itihāsa* and *Purāṇa* are explanatory digests on the enigmatic truths of the Vedas (इतिहासपुराणाभ्यां वेदं समुपबृंहयेत्) is exemplified in the interpretation of the figures under notice. The word Gandharva is derived in various ways in the Ṛigvēda and the same meaning is upheld by explanatory notes in the Purāṇas. In Ṛigvēda VIII, 77, 5, Indra is stated to have cut asunder *Gandharva* in the etherial regions, (अबुध्नेषु पदनिधानयोग्यस्थानरहितेषु रजस्सु लोकेषु । अन्तरिक्षप्रदेशेष्वित्यर्थ:।— Sāyaṇa) for the protection of the Brāhmaṇas (ब्रह्मभ्य इद्वृधे—ब्राह्मणेभ्य एव वृधे वर्धनाय–Sāyaṇa). Here the word *Gandharva* is described by Sāyaṇa as meaning ' a cloud ' (गामुदकं धारयतीति गन्धर्वो मेघः ।).

Another *Ṛik* of the same *maṇḍala* records the expedition of Śatakratu (*i.e.* Indra) in company with Kutsa, against the invincible Gandharva who had inflicted a defeat on the Sage Ētasa. Gandharva is here equated with Sūrya *i.e.* Sun-god. Sāyaṇa explains in his commentary on this *Ṛik*, that *Gandharva* was Sūrya (गन्धर्वं गवां रश्मीनां धर्तारं सूर्यं). But in Ṛigvēda I, 163,2, Gandharva is regarded as one of the genii who regulate the course of the sun's horses. According to Sāyaṇa's gloss, the horse which had been given by Yama *i.e.* Fire-god, was yoked to the chariot by त्रित *i.e.* Wind-god and was seized by reins (*i.e.* controlled) by Gandharva *i.e.* Sōma. The Gandharva is called the protector of Sōma and Vāyukēśa. He is referred to in plural which clearly indicates that there was a class of demi-gods called the Gandharvas (अपश्यमत्र मनसा जगन्वान् व्रते गन्धर्वां अपि वायुकेशान् ॥ *Ṛik* III, 38, 6 ... व्रते यज्ञे वायुकेशान् वायुवत् चञ्चलरश्मीन् गन्धर्वान् सोमरक्षकान् स्वानभ्राजादीन् मनसा अपश्यम् ।– Sāyaṇa) who were to guard the Sōma. This function

of the Gandharvas is clearly mentioned in the *Ṛik*. IX, 83-4 :—

गन्धर्व इत्था पदमस्य रक्षति पाति देवानां जनिमान्यद्भुतः ।
गृभ्णाति रिपुं निधया निधापतिः सुकृत्तमा मधुनो भक्षमाशत ॥

In the ninth maṇḍala, Sūkta 86, 36, the heavenly Gandharva (दिव्यं गन्धर्वं) is identified with Sōma. He is called Viśvāvasu (Rv. X, 139,4,5,6 : विश्वावसु सोमगन्धर्वमापौ etc. विश्वावसुरभि तन्नो गृणातु दिव्यो गन्धर्वो etc. etc.) and knows and makes known the secrets of heaven and divine truths generally. He has a mystic power over women and a right to possess them. He is invoked to unite the woman with her husband (अन्यामिच्छ प्रफर्व्यं संजायां पत्यासृज ॥— R.V. X, 85,22). As a class, the Gandharvas live in the sky and guard Sōma (तं गन्धर्वाः प्रत्यगृभ्णन् त सोमे रसमा दधुरिन्द्रायेन्दो परिस्रव– R V. IX, 113, 3). Their habitation is stated in some *Riks* to be the region of the air and the heavenly waters गन्धर्वस्य ध्रुवे पदे -R.V. I, 22, 14). Sāyaṇa explains this ध्रुवं पदं as अंतरिक्ष and quotes a statement of the *Nrisiṁha Tāpanīyaśākhā* that the sky is inhabited by groups (गण) of Yakshas, Gandharvas and Apsaras (यक्षगन्धर्वाप्सरोगणसेवितमंतरिक्षम्—नृ. ता. 102). In R. V. IX, 85, 12, the Gandharva is identified with the sun illuminating the Heaven and Earth (प्रारुरुचद्रोदसि मातरा शुचिः) and is stated to inhabit the heaven (ऊर्ध्वो गन्धर्वो अधिनाके अस्थाद्). From R.V. X, 10, 4, it is clearly seen that he lives with his wife in heavenly waters. A further interesting description of this demi-god is contained in R. V. X, 177, 2 that the Gandharva uttered a speech in the womb, which the पतंग *i.e.* the sun had borne in his mind. This heavenly speech was given out thereafter by the poets (तां द्योतमानां स्वर्यं मनीषामृतस्य पदे कवयो निपांति ॥). It may also be pointed out that the second *Ṛik* of the eleventh *sūkta* of the same *maṇḍala* seems to hint that the Gandharvas were delighted to join the mind to the music or sound of the river (*nada*) (रपद्गन्धर्वीरप्याच योषणा नदस्य नादे परिपातु मे मनः ।) which idea is developed in epic poetry where the Gandharvas are well-known as celestial musicians or heavenly singers in the court of Indra. Thus, in the Ṛigvēda, we find the Gandharvas invested with mystic power over woman, having

their habitation in the heaven or the region of the air or the heavenly waters. They are introduced aa an individual or as a class and one of them is called Viśvāvasu. They are designated by the term Vāyukēśa (wind-haired) and stated to guard the heavenly Sōma for the sake of which Indra fought with them and took it forcibly for the good of the human race. They are endowed with sweet speech and have a power to possess or seduce women. In the hymns quoted above, the Gandharvas are described as दिव्य गन्धर्व or the heavenly Gandharva as opposed to मनुष्य गन्धर्व or human Gandharva, who are introduced in the Upanishads and epic mythology,

The statements of the Ṛigvēda describing these demi-gods, are rendered more clear in the hymns of the Atharva Vēda. The Bhuvanapati-Sūkta in the second book (द्वितीय काण्ड), introduces the heavenly Gandharva (दिव्यो गन्धर्वो भुवनस्य यस्पतिः) who was inhabiting the sky (दिवि ते सधस्थम्) and had the Apsaras whose abode was the sea, for wives. The latter had the power to mystify the mind (मनोमुहः। ताभ्यो गन्धर्व पत्नीभ्योऽप्सरोभ्योऽकरं नमः । A. V. II, 5). In the fifth book of the Atharva Vēda (A.V. II,5,2) the Gandharvas are enumerated along with the *Pitṛis*, the gods (देवजनाः), and the minor deities (पृथग्देवाः) and their number is given as six thousand three hundred and thirty three (6333). In the *Pāpamōchana-sūkta*, (A.V. II, 6,4) the Gandharvas and Apsaras are invoked along with the Aśvins, Brahmaṇaspati and Aryaman for the removal of sin and in the विवाहसूक्त (A.V. XIV. 2, 34-36), their blessings are prayed for a happy union of the couples in marriage ceremonies. The Gandharva is the receptacle of secrets (गन्धर्वो धाम परमं गुहायत्) and knows and makes known the secrets of heaven and divine truths generally (A.V, II, 2) He is said to make an enticing speech (अब्रवीदुतद्गन्धर्वः काम्यं वचः- A.V. XX, 128, 3)

• In epic poetry, the Gandharvas are described as the celestial musicians or heavenly singers (स तमास्थाय भगवान् राजराजो महारथम् । प्रययौ देवगन्धर्वैः स्तूयमानो महाद्युतिः ॥— महाभारत II, 161, 26). I have already pointed out that in the Ṛigvēda the Gandharva is endowed

with sweet speech (cf. काम्यं वचः of the Atharva Vēda XX, 128, 3) which in the epic mythology has been ascribed to the Gandharvas and Kinnaras who form the orchestra at the banquets of the gods and belong together with the Apsaras to the Indra's heaven sharing also in his battles. The *Yājñavalkya-smṛiti* corroborates this idea when it says that the Gandharvas granted an auspicious voice to women (chapt. I, 71). That these celestial musicians held the monopoly of divine music is set forth in the classical and technical literatures and inscriptions also from the earliest period down to the 17th century A D. when the religious and spiritual traditions of the followers of Vaidika rites were alive on the Indian soil. These will be dealt with later on.

Thus, we are furnished with the following meanings of the word Gandharva as explained by Sāyaṇa viz.

(1) गविगन् धृञोवः इति च प्रत्ययः। तत्सन्नियोगेन
गो शब्दस्य च गन्नादेशः। गामुदकं धारयतीति गन्धर्वो मेघः। *i. e.* one that contains water *i e.* the cloud is the Gandharva

(2) गन्धर्वं गवां रश्मीनां धर्तारं सूर्यं (the sun) and by the same process of derivation (3) गन्धर्वान्=सोमरक्षकान्. In the *Śabdakalpadruma* however, is offered a more appropriate derivation explaining their functions directly in the words गन्धं संगीतवाद्यादिजनितप्रमोदं अर्वति प्राप्नोति इति। स्वर्ग गायकः *i.e.* the heavenly musician who takes delight in singing and playing on musical instruments. This etymology is suggested in A.V. 12, 1, 2, 3, where the odour (*gandha*) of the earth is said to rise to the Gandharvas (यस्ते गन्धः पृथिवि संबभूव यं बिभ्रत्योषधयो यमापः। यं गन्धर्वा अप्सरसश्च भेजिरे). The Gandharvas are classified under two heads viz. (1) दिव्य गन्धर्व or divine Gandharvas and (2) मनुष्य गन्धर्व *i e.* the human Gandharvas. The former are extolled in the hymns from the Vēdas cited above and hold a higher position and status in the pantheon of the Vēdic theologists, than the human Gandharvas. They are born of the divine seed (देवयोनयः) and are divided into eleven categories according to the *Vahnipurāṇa*:— अभ्राजोऽङ्घारिवम्मारी सूर्यवर्चास्तथा कृधुः। हस्तः सुहस्तः स्वाम्येन मूर्धन्वांश्च महामनाः॥ विश्वावसुः कृशानुश्च गन्धर्वै-

कादशो गण: || —quoted from the *Vāchaspatya* under Gandharvas. Campare in this connection Sāyaṇa's gloss on R.V. III, 38, 6 गन्धर्वान् सोमरक्षकान् स्वानभ्राजादीन् in which the Abhrāja gaṇa is specified. Jaṭādhara, however enumerates the eleven classes differently as follows:—

> हाहा हूहू श्चित्ररथो हस्तो विश्वावसुस्तथा ।
> गोमायुस्तुंबरुर्नंदिरेव माद्याश्च ते स्मृता: ॥
>
> – quoted from the *Vāchaspatya.*

While narrating the origin of the Universe, the Manusmṛiti introduces the ten Prajāpatis who created the seven Manus, the *Maharshis* (the sages) and the Yakshas, Rākshasas, Piśāchas, Gandharvas, Apsaras. Asuras, Nāgas, Sarpas, Suparṇas, the groups (गण) of the Pitṛis . . . . Kinnaras, Vānaras etc.

> (यक्ष रक्ष: पिशाचांश्च गन्धर्वाप्सरसोऽसुरान् ।
> नागान्सर्पान्सुपर्णांश्च पितॄणां च पृथग्गणान् ॥ ....
> किन्नरान्वानरान्मत्स्यान्विविधांश्च विहंगमान्– chapt. I, 37–39

The commentator Kullūkabhaṭṭa explains :— गन्धर्वाश्चित्ररथादय: । अप्सरस: उर्वश्याद्या: , following the renumeration of Jaṭādhara. In the *Śivatatva-ratnākara* an encpclopaedic work of Basavarāja of Keḷadi (17th centvry A.D.) the Dēva-Gandharvas are divided into Maunēyas and Prāpēyas each of which has sixteen and ten clans respectively. Their names are enumerated in Kallōla III, chapt. 3, vv. 4–15. This classification is not found elsewhere and appears to follow some local Vīraśaiva tradition.

In the third book (स्कन्ध) of the Bhāgavata whose present reeension is ascribed by scholars to the 8th sentury A. D. but which from the available epigraphical and literary evidences may be relegated in its original form to a very high antiquity going back to the Pre-Christian era, there is a lucid and thorough account of the creation ot the universe. In the narrative of the divine creation (देवसर्ग), the following verses specify the eight-fold creation thus :—the *Visudha* (Gods), *Pitṛis* (manes) *Asuras, Gandharva, Apsarasas, Siddhas, Yakshas, Rākshasas, Chāraṇas, Bhūtas, Prētas, Piśāchas, Vidyādharas*, and *Kinnaras*

देवसर्गश्चाष्टविधो विबुधा पितरोऽसुराः ।
गन्धर्वाप्सरसः सिद्धाः यक्षरक्षांसि चारणाः ॥
भूत प्रेत पिशाचाश्च विद्याध्राः किन्नरादयः ।
दशैते विदुराख्याता सर्गास्ते विश्वसकृताः ॥

The commentators Vijayadhvaja (14th century A. D.) and Yadupatyāchārya (17th century A.D.) recencile the discrepancy in the original statement (अष्ट विधः) and the actual enumeration which exceeds fourteen categories, by the process of inclusion of some into the main heads so as to bring the number to eight (च शब्देन संख्या विशेषं केषांचिदंतर्भावं सूचयति ।– विजयध्वजीय on III, 3, 11, 27–28)

The functions and duties of the several godlings given here are explained in the commentaries as follows :—

नृत्तगानादि कर्तारो वाहनादि कृतस्तथा ।
सिद्ध सिद्धेति वक्तारश्चाराश्चैषांकचित् क्वचित् ॥
सेवाकरा इति ह्य तै भेदैरष्टविधा मताः ।
अन्ये च ये तु सर्वज्ञाः विबुधास्ते प्रकीर्तिताः ।
तथाऽन्ये कर्मभिस्तैस्तैरष्ट भेदांतरं गताः ॥

quoted in the *Vijayadhvajīya*. Their functions are explained more clearly in the *Yādupatya* in the following prose passage :—
नृत्य गान कर्तार इति गन्धर्वाप्सरसाम् । वाहनादि कर्तार इति यक्ष रक्षसाम् । अत्रादिपदेन युद्धादि संग्रहः । सिद्ध सिद्धेति सिद्धानां । सिद्धं सिद्धमिति वक्तारः इत्यर्थः । चाराश्चैषामिति चारणानाम् । कचित्कचित्कायविशेषे सेवाकरा इति भूतादि किन्नरांतानाम् ।

The Gandharvas and Apsaras perform singing and dancing before the gods; the Yakshas and Rākshasas are to act as their vehicles or conveyances besides doing battles for the gods. The Siddhas should always proclaim "success, success" to the gods and the Chāraṇas should function as spies (चाराः). The Bhūtas, Prētas, Piśāchas, Vidyādharas and Kinnaras, should render service to the gods by assuming various bodies. The functions of these demi-gods are also indicated in the verses sung in praise of God Narasiṁha by the Gandharvas, Kiṁpurushas, Kinnaras

etc., which are extracted below from the Bhāgavata, Skandha VII, 8, 50 etc.,

गन्धर्वा ऊचु :— वयं विभो ते नटनाट्यगायका etc. ॥ 50 ॥

" Oh Lord we are your singers, actors and dancers."

किंपुरुषा ऊचुः — वयं किंपुरुषास्त्वं तु महापुरुष ईश्वरः ।
अयं कुपुरुषो नष्टो धिक्कृतः साधुभिर्यदा ॥ 53 ॥

we *look* like Purushas (किंपुरुष=पुरुषाभास) but you are indeed a Great Purusha. For,

" This despicable person (*i.e.* Hiranya Kaśyapa) despised by the good people is destroyed (by you) "

किन्नरा ऊचुः — वयमीश किन्नरगणा स्तवानुगा
दितिजेन विष्टि ममुनाऽनु कारिताः । etc.

" Oh Lord, we are your servants. But this son of Diti (*i.e.* Hiranya Kaśyapa) caused us to serve him forcibly (विष्टि= forced labour) " The nature of the service is not specified

A word will now be said about the habitation of these demi-gods according to the Purāṇas As stated above, the sky (अंतरिक्ष) and the waters were specified in the Vēdas as their *locale.* The *Śabda-Kalpadruma* locates the Gandharvalōka above the region of the Guhyakas and below that of the Vidyādharas. The *Kāśīkhaṇḍa* describes the *Gandharvas* and their residence in the following verses which corroborate the statements made above on the basis of the Purāṇic and Vēdic texts :—

गान्धर्वस्त्वेष लोकोऽमी गन्धर्वाश्च शुभव्रताः ।
देवानां गायना ह्येते चारणाः स्तुतिपाठकाः ॥
गीतज्ञा अति गीतेन तोषयंति नराधिपान् ।
स्तुवंति च धनाढ्यांश्च धन लोभेन मोहिताः ॥
राज्ञां प्रसाद लब्धानि सुवासांसि धनानि च ।
द्रव्याण्यपि सुगंधीनि कर्पूरादीन्यनेकशः ॥
ब्राह्मणेभ्यः प्रयच्छन्तः गीतं गायंत्यहर्निशम् ।
तेन पुण्येन गन्धर्वो लोकस्तेषां विधीयते ॥

—quoted from the *Śabdakalpadruma.*

"This is the world of the Gandharvas who are the singers of the gods. The Chāraṇas who are expert musicians are the reciters of eulogies and please the kings by their songs. They praise the wealthy persons through greed for money. They frequently give away to Brāhmaṇas whatever articles of perfumery, wealth, clothes etc. they receive as gifts through the king's favour. Through merit thus obtained, they will be eligible to the Gandharvalōka". These are evidently the *Manushya Gandharvas* who by the performance of such meritorious deeds are entitled to a place in the Gandharvalōka The same idea is expressed in the *Śabdārthachintāmaṇi* which explains the distinction between the *Dēva-Gandharva* and *Manushya Gandharva* in the following verses :—

अस्मिन्कल्पे मनुष्यः सन् पुण्यपाकविशेषतः ।
गन्धर्वत्वं समापन्नो मर्त्यं गन्धर्व उच्यते ।
पूर्वकल्प कृतात्पुण्यात् कल्पादावेव चेद्भवेत् ।
गन्धर्वत्वं तादृशोऽ त्र देव गन्धर्व उच्यते ॥

The Dēva-gandharvas are mentioned in the Vēdic hymns quoted above and the Manushya-gandharvas whose status is much lower in the gradation of the Vēdic pantheon are also referred to in the epic and classical poems. In the Rāmāyaṇa, Lava and Kuśa are described as twin brothers endowed with sweet voice like the Gandharvas (भ्रातरौ स्वरसंपन्नौ गन्धर्वाविव रूपिणौ ॥. 4, 10) who are evidently the human Gandharvas.

That the Gandharvas have a prior right to possess women is also indicated in the marriage verse :—

सोमः प्रथमो विविदे गन्धर्वो विविद उत्तरः ।
तृतीयो अग्निष्टे पति स्तुरीयस्ते मनुष्यजाः ॥ (R.V. X 85, 40,-49)

which states that a bride is first taken to wife by Sōma, Gandharva and Agni in order before she is married by the human bridegroom. The *Yājñavalkya-Smṛiti* (I, 71) declares that Sōma imparted purity to women, Gandharva an auspicious speech (शुभांगिरं) and Agni all sacredness, regarding them ever pure (मेध्या वै योषितो ह्यतः). This is only an extension of the Vedic conception of the काम्यं वचः of the Gandharvas and of the epic idea of

their being the musicians of the heaven. A brief account of the origin and description of these demigods is given in chapter XI of the *Hindu Mythology* by W.J. Wilkins and in T.A, Gopinatharao's *Elements of Hindu Iconography*, Vol. II, p. 568.

The Kinnaras who are included in the eight-fold divine creation (देव सर्ग) of Brahmā given in the Bhāgavata (III-11-27-28) quoted above are also the semi-divine beings who according to the *Yādupatyam* were to render service to Gods in various ways (कचित्क्वचित्काय विशेषे सेवाकरा इति भुतादि किन्नरांतानाम्). The Kinnaras are enumerated along side the Rākashasas, Vānaras, and Yakshas as the progeny of Pulastya in the Mahābhārata. (Bhārata, Āraṇyakaparva, chapt. 6) while the Kiṁpurushas are clubbed together with the Śalabhas, Siṁhas (*lions*), Vyāghras (*tigers*), Yakshas and Hāhāmṛigas (*ibid*) among the descendants of Pulaha. In *Bhāgavata* (VIII, 20, 13), the Kinnaras are accordingly mentioned separately from the Kimpurushas in the verse (नेदुर्मुहुर्दुन्दुभय: सहस्रशो गन्धर्वकिंपूरुष किन्नरा जगु: ॥). Like their compeers the Gandharvas, they are also endowed with sweet voice and are known in literature for their melodious songs. (compare for example उद्गास्यतामिच्छति किन्नराणां—कुमारसंभव, किमिदं किन्नर कण्ठि सुप्यते—रघुवंश). The physiological and iconographical features of these semi-divine beings as made out from literature and inscriptions will be studied in the next chapter. The *Śabdakalpadruma* locates the Kimpurusha-varsha between the Hēmakūṭa (*i.e.* Mēru) mountain and the Himālayas included in the nine continents (खण्ड) of the Jambūdvīpa. But its exact situation can not be made out clearly. The same authority suggests the derivation of the word Kinnara as कुत्सितो नर: . Monier Williams explains it as 'what sort of man' (किं-नर) being originally a kind of monkey (vā-nara) and in later times reckoned among the Gandharvas or celestial choristers. They were attached to the service of Kubēra who is known as the lord of Kinnaras (किन्नरेश), in literature and inscriptions.

It may be observed that the divine creation which the four-faced God Brahmā made in the beginning of the universe is

wholly transplanted in the Brahmāṇḍa (*i.e.* created universe) where, even quarters for the various beings are allotted. This is followed suit in the buildings of a city or town which according to the science of town-planning, should contain among others, separate quarters for the Gandharvas who are represented by the drummers, musicians and dancing courtezans. The *Mānasāra* states that in the Gandharva part, should be the houses of the drummers etc,, halls fit for the dancing or music of courtezans and the residences of the architects (स्थापक) should be situated in the Gandharva plot. Even a temple should have a separate plot for the Gandharva where should be a pavilion for gathering flowers for worship. (*Mānasāra* chapts. IX ahd XXXII). Dwelling houses also should be marked by various plots of which the one for the ***Gandharva*** should contain the house of those princesses who can be seen by the moon. These are the top-most portions of a mansion or the *antariksha* plots which are suitable for the quarters of the queens of kings of nine ranks (*Ibid*, chapt. XXXVI).

CHAPTER II

THE GANDHARVAS AND KINNARAS IN THE JAINA AND BUDDHIST PANTHEONS.

The Gandharvas and Kinnaras are adopted by the Jainas also in their system of theology. Their description and functions do not materially change from the ones given above from the Vedic and post-Vedic evidences. But the classification and their habitat are slightly different. According to the *Tattvārthasūtra* chapt. IV. sūtras 1–12, the gods of the Jaina pantheon are of four orders namely Bhavanavāsī *i e.* Residential, Vyantara *i.e* peripatetic, Jyōtishka *i.e.* Stellar and Vaimānika *i.e.* Heavenly. Every class has ten grades :— इन्द्र, सामानिक, त्रायस्त्रिंश, पारिषद, आत्मरक्ष, लोकपाल, अनीक, प्रकीर्णक, आभियोग्य (that grade of celestial beings who form themselves into conveyances as horse, lion, swan etc., etc. for the other grades) and किल्बिषक (the servile grade). But the gods in the व्यंतर and ज्योतिष्क regions are denied the privileges of having the grades of त्रायस्त्रिंश (like ministers or priests, being thirty three in number) and लोकपाल (the police or the protectors of the people). The gods of the Vyantara region are given in Sūtra as व्यंतरा: किंन्नर किम्पुरुष महोरग गन्धर्व यक्ष राक्षस भूत पिशाचा: ॥ ११ ॥. Some of these live in the innumerable oceans and continents. The seven classes of the Vyantara gods, *i.e.* all except the Rākshasas live in the Khara-bhāga or first upper-most stratum of the first earth Ratnaprabhā. The Rākshasas live in the second or Paṅka-bhāga of the same. It may be remarked that among the Bhavanavāsi gods all except the Asura-kumāras viz. Nāgakumāra, Vidyut-kumāra, Suparṇakumāra, Agni-kumāra, Vātakumāra, Stanita-kumāra, Udadhikumāra, Dvīpakumāra and Dik-kumāra reside in the Khara-bhāga of Ratnaprabhā, whereas the Asurakumāras like the Rākshasas, live in the Paṅka-bhāga (see the *Tattvārthādhigamasūtra* by Umāsvami Āchārya edited by J. H. Jaini, M.A., pp. 96–99). It is interesting to note that the Kinnaras are distinguished as a separate class, from the Kimpurashas in the Sūtra quoted above, evidently from the difference in their

respective physiological features which will be discussed in the sequel.

The functions of the Gandharvas are explained in *Abhidhāna-rājēndra* of Vijayarājēndra-sūri, a Jaina lexicon of the mediæval period, by the synonym देवगायने (singer of the gods) व्यन्तराऽष्टमभेदे. They are divided into twelve classes :—(1) हाहा, (2) हूहू, (3) तम्बुरव:, (4) नारदा:, (5) ऋषिवादिका;, (6) भूतवादिका: (7) कादम्बा: (8) महाकादम्बा:, . (9) रैवता:, (10) विश्वावसव:, (11) गीतरतय: (12) गीतयशस: whose functions are, as can be surmised from their names, intimately connected with music and singing. The Kinnares are likewise divine beings who have to perform similiar duties. The gods of the first three orders *viz.*, भवनवासी, व्यन्तर and ज्योतिष्क have bodily sexual enjoyment like human beings up to the second heaven or Īśāna (काय प्रवीचारा आ ऐशानात् ॥ ७ ॥) and in the rest have the sexual enjoyment by means of touch, sight of beauty, sound and mind as follows :—

In the third	and	fourth	heavens by	touch only.
,, 5,	6,	7 and 8th	,, ,,	sight only.
,, 9,	10,	11 and 12th	,, ,,	sound only.
,, 13,	14,	15, and 16th	,, ,,	mind only.

The Vaimānikas have no sexual enjoyment. Beyond the 16th heaven there is only the male sex (*ibid.* pp. 98). It would thus be seen that the Gandharvas and Kinnaras live on this earth in the *Khara-bhāga* or the upper stratum and mix up with the human beings.

The Buddhists speak of three kinds of gods (*dēvas*) ; those by common consent (*sammati*), those by purity (*Viśuddhi*) and those by birth (*upapatti*). The kings and royal personages are the gods by recognition, the recluses and other holy personages are the gods by purity, Brahmā, Prajāpati and other celestial beings are the gods by birth. The Niddēśa list of *dēvatās* comprises five groups of five kinds of each : (1) ascetics, (2) domestic animals (elephants, horses, cows, cocks, crows),

(3) physical forces and elements (fire. stone etc.), (4) lower gods (*Bhummadēva Nāga, Suparṇṇa, Yakshā, asurā, gandhabbā*) (Digh–N., ii, p. 254, 257), (5) high gods (inhabitants of the dēva-lōka proper: Mahārāja, Chanda, Suriya, Inda, Brahma). Thus, the Gandharvas etc. are classed under the lower gods whose function is to attend on the Buddha and Bōdhisattva. Pañchaśikhā Gandharva, the harper of Indra and Dhṛitarāshṭra-Yaksha the guardian of the Eastern quarter are frequently mentioned in the Buddhist legends (see Barhut, Book II, Jātaka scenes by B. M. Barua, p. 56–57) At all important junctures of the life of Buddha Śākyamuni, Dhṛitarāshṭra-Yakha who as the epithet indicates, is a holder of the royal scepture, a Mahārāja, the supreme lord of the Gandharvas, is said to have come with his retinue to ward off the dangers and pay homage to the Bōdhisattva and Buddha now and then.

In the opinion of Vincent Smith those godlings were the most powerful forces in the primtive ages and " must be regarded as the last remnant of a whole host of forgotten powers, once mighty and to be placated, each in its own place. Strange beings of another sphere, they could not wholly be passed over either by Brāhmaṇ or Buddhist. (*A History of Fine Art in India and Ceylon,* p. 7).

CHAPTER III

THE GANDHARVAS AND KINNARAS IN INSCRIPTIONS.

A study of the inscriptions and sculptures belonging to the several historical periods and epochs of sculptural styles as demonstrated in the ancient temples both South Indian and North Indian will, it may be pointed out, show that the Gandharvas, Kinnaras and other godlings were to attend on the principal deity in the central shrine doing Him suitable services such as singing, dancing, waiving fly-whisks, and offering garlands of flowers etc., in a worshipping attitude. The technical literature in Sanskrit on the Hindu and Jaina pantheons, dealing with the iconographical features of the various deities, will form an incontrovertible piece of evidence in support of the conclusions arrived at by an independent study of the icons found in different parts of India. I shall briefly notice here a few typical examples from Indian records where the Gandharvas etc , are introduced as the retinue of the principal deity. In some temples these minor deities used to be worshipped, as a necessary part of the temple establishment. From one of the inscriptions in the Lahore Museum (9th century A. D.), it appears that the temple was adorned with the images of Krishṇa and of the gods (*dēva*), demons (*daitya*), Gandharvas, Yakshas, Kinnaras and the Siddhas (.Sirsa stone inscription of Bhōjadēva, *Ep. Ind.* Vol. XXI p. 196 cf. देव दैत्य गन्धर्व यक्ष गण किन्नर सिद्धरूपं). The Tālgund pillar inscription (*Ep. Ind.* Vol.VIII,p. 30) of Kadamba Kākusthavarman (6th century A. D.) similarly records that the temple of Praṇavēśvara contained the images of groups of the Siddhas, Gandharvas and Rākshasa (cf. स इह भगवतो भवस्यादि देवस्य सिद्धालये सिद्ध गान्धर्व रक्षोगणै: सेविते— verse 33). The Gandharvas ete. are also referred to in the Nasik Cave inscriptions (*ibid.* p. 60, No. 3, plate I, lines 8-9) as participating in battles fought by Siri Sātakarṇi Gōtamiputa पवन गरुळसिध यखरखस विजाधर भूत गधव चारण चद दिवाकर नखत गहविचिग समर सिरसि जितरिपु सघस—॥ 8-3). That the demi-gods took part in battles is learnt from the *Yādupatyam*, a commentary, on *Bhāgavata* III, 11, 27–28 quoted above

(अत्रादिपदेन गुह्यादि संग्रहः ।). These demi-gods were the devout worshippers of the main deity offering prayers, music and dancing, as already made out from the literary evidences quoted above. The epigraphical evidence also points to the same conclusion. The Tipperah copper-plate grant of Lōkanātha dated in his forty-fourth regnal year (A. D. 650 ; *Ep Ind* Vol XV, p. 307) records the construction of the temple of Bhagavān Ananta Nārāyaṇa whose person is stated to have been adored by the chief gods, the '*asuras*, the sun, the moon, Kuvēra, the Kinnara, the Vidyādharas, the chief serpent-gods, the Gandharvas, Varuṇa, the Yakshas (तत्र भगवतोऽमरवरासुर दिनकर शशधर कुवेर किन्नरे विद्याधर महोरग गन्धर्व वरुण यक्ष....भिष्टुतवपुषोऽनन्तनारायणस्य). The Chandrehe inscription of Prabōdhaśiva dated in the Kalachuri year 724 (A. D 973) (*Ibid.* Vol. XXI, P. 151), states, while describing the god Śiva, that his fame was incessantly sung with delight in a light tone by Gandharvas and Vidyādharas in the assembly of Indra in the celestial garden (देवोद्यान गतेंद्र संसदि मुदा गन्धर्व विद्याधरैरानन्दाय च धूर्जटे :....प्रतितपः शश्वद्यशो गीयते ॥ 8 ॥ The Arthuna inscription of the Paramāra Chāmuṇḍarāya dated in A.D. 1080 ascribes the singing and music to the Kinnaras in the verse ब्रम्हस्तबस्य यत्कीर्तिर्मंजरीवोपरिस्थिता । शश्वत्किन्नर संगीघैरुपगीताऽधिकं बभौ ॥ 2 ॥ (*Ep. Ind.* Vol. XIV pp. 297. ff.)

The Tiruvoṟṟiyūr inscription of Tammusiddhi, (*Ibid.* Vol. VII. p 151) dated in Śaka 1129 (A.D. 1207 – 8) states while describing the glory of Tammusiddhi, in the verse

यशः शुभ्रं यस्य श्रवण सुभगं संसदि मुहुः
सहस्राक्षः शृण्वन्मधुर वचसः किन्नरमुखात् । verse 26–

(when the thousand–eyed (Indra) in his court constantly hears of his (*i. e.* Tammusiddhi's) brilliant fame, pleasant to the ear, from the sweet-voiced mouth of the Kinnaras, etc.), that the Kinnaras were the musicians in the court of Indra. From the Veḷvikuḍi grant of Neḍuñjaḍaiyan (*circa* A.D. 770), in which Neḍuñjaḍaiyan son of Tērmāṟan is described

with a string of epithets such as *Manūpaman, Marddıla-vīran, Giristhiran, gīta-Kinnaran* etc , it may be gathered that the Kinnaras were taken as a standard to test the quality of music. These ideas are common to the Jainas also according to whom the Gandharvas and Kinnaras belong to the Vyantara region. One of the Jaina sculptures of Mathura represents the worship of a *stūpa* by two *Suparṇas* and five centaurs or Kinnaras who carry jars filled with flower-bunches, fans made of branches etc. (*Ep. Ind.* Vol. II, p 319). This shows that the Suparṇas and Kinnaras were the attendants of the Tīrthaṅkaras doing services of various kinds. That the Gandharvas were the repositories of the science of music is also learnt from the statement in the Hathigumphā incription of Khāravela that he (the king) versed in the science of the Gandharvas (*i.e.* music) entertained the capital with the exhibition of *dapa* (country dance), dancing, singing and instrumental music and by causing to be held festivities and assemblies (*samāja*) (*Ep. Ind.* Vol. XX, p. 87).

From the few typical the epigraphical references ranging in date from the 1st century A D. onwards, quoted above, it may be concluded that the traditions recorded in literature were actually handed down in practice consistently, throughout the historic period of Indian history. The foregoing discussion makes it quite clear that the demi-gods under notice, though holding a subordinate position in the Vaidıka and Jaina pantheons were considered indispensable in every temple and that their fnnctions were, singing, dancing and playıng upon musical instruments besides rendering various kinds ol service in battles etc. One additional feature of the Kinnaris is that they were apperently regarded as the protectors of the village or field boundaries. The stones with the figures of Kinnaris appear to have been planted in the corners of the boundary line of a field to proclaim that they were being guarded by the Kinnaris (*cf.* for example the Lakshmēśvara inscription of Jagadēkamalla dated 10th regnal year : *Īśānyada sīme Iṭṭageya hāḻa holada baḍagaṇa hōreya kinnari gal*). We have noted above

that according to the Buddhists, Dhṛitarāshṭra–Yaksha was the protector of the Eastern quarter paying homage to the Buddha.

The various functions of the Gandharvas and Kinnaras namely (1) Singing, music and dancing, (2) seduction and possession of women, (3) doing service to the principal deity on whom they attend such as offering flowers, fruits etc. and (4) participating in battles etc., are represented in sculptures belonging to different periods of history. These will be studied in the sequel, after their physiological characterstic features are made out from the literature and specific icons found in different parts of India.

CHAPTER IV

ICONOGRAPHY OF THE GANDHARVAS AND KINNARAS AS MADE OUT FROM LITERATURE.

In this chapter, we shall study the physiological and iconographical features of the Gandharvas and Kinnaras from the available literary sources. The Sanskrit lexicons reckon these mythical beings among the *dēva-yōni* gods. *Amara* (I, II,) clubs together all the *dēva-yōni* beings in the verse

विद्याधरोऽप्सरो यक्षरक्षो गन्धर्व किन्नरा: ।
पिशाचो गुह्यक: सिद्धो भूतोऽमी देवयोनय: ॥

While commenting ont his couplet, Kshīrasvāmi explains the several groups, of which the following relevent portion is extracted :— विद्याधरा: जीमूतवाहनादय: खड्ग गुटिकाञ्जनादि विद्याधारिणश्च । अप्सु सरन्त्यप्सरसो देव योषित: रम्भादय: । .... गन्धर्वास्तुम्बुरुप्रभृतय: देवगायना: । किन्नरा: अश्वादिमुखा: शृङ्गारिण: । पिशाचा: पिशिताशास्तामसा: स्वयं निर्मांसा: । etc. etc. The Vidyādharas are Jīmūtavāhana and others who bear a sword, pills, magic ointment and charms, the Apsaras are the concubines of gods moving in water namely Rambhā etc. The Gandharvas are the singers of gods, namely Tumburu and others; the Kinnaras have the faces of horse etc , and are amorous. The Piśāchas are flesh-eaters themselves being reduced to skeleton, without flesh. The *Śāsvatakōśa* (verse 101), the *Nānārtha Saṅgraha* of Ajayapāla (p. 31 V. 6, Madras University edition), and the *Śabdaugha Kalpadruma* describe the Gandharvas as an animal born in the mid-region (अंतरा भवसत्व) and moving in the sky (खचर). The *Mēdinīkōśa* has similarly the verse

गन्धर्व: पशुभेदे स्यात्पुंस्कोकिल तुरंगयो: । अंतराभवसत्वे च गायने खेचरेऽपि च ॥

The *Abhidhānaratnamālā* of Halāyudha does not give any descriptive epithets about this demi-god. The Kinnaras are, however, delineated in some of the lexicons with their characteristic marks such as horse-face and human body etc. Halāyudha gives

किन्नरः स्यात्किम्पुरुषो मयुरश्वमुखस्तथा। (Amara has स्यात्किन्नरः किम्पुरुषस्तुरंग वदनो मयुः on which Kshīrasvāmi adds किंचिन्नरोऽश्व मुखत्वात्किन्नरः —partially human with a horse's head). The details as to how they should be portrayed in sculpture and painting are not furnished by the lexicons or the commentaries thereon. From the *Matsyapurāṇa*, *Agnipurāṇa* and the *Vishṇudharmōttara purāṇa* a few particulars can be gleaned, but they are not enough to exhaust the full elucidation of the subject. The only source of information in regard to this study are the sculptures and paintings available in different parts of India which should be studied on a scientific classification and a plausible skeleton of the forms of these demi-gods reconstructed from the data thus gathered. This problem will be studied in detail in the next chapter. But suffice it to indicate the literary evidences so far as posaible which throw light on the images of the Gandharvas and Kinnaras according to the Hindu, Buddhist and Jaina schools of ancient sculptural art. It has been pointed out on a previous occasion that the conception of image-making in the three principal schools of Indian religious thought, is practically the same though in some minor details some defferences are discernible due to the influence of particular religious bias. The styles of architectural and sculptural arts are found to exhibit a slow development marked by a lapse of periods of time combined with the intercourse with the neighbouring or foreign countries.

The description of the images of the demi-gods is not given in the Āgamas and the technical literature bearing on the iconography of images. There are however a few statements here and there which are collected to get a connected idea of the subject. The earliest literary evidence is furnished by the *Mānasāra* a work of considerable interest for the history of Indian temple architecture and sculpture of deities. It is teeming with very valuable information on the minute details of image-making with due regard to the measurement of the limbs. The Buddhist and Jaina icons are also briefly described in the respective chapters.

In the chapter on the mythical beings (chapt. 58: यक्षविद्याधरादि लक्षणम्) the Gandharvas are characterised by their erect position (स्थानकं), by their singing in a dancing pose with a lute or a charming stick and by other musical instruments including the lute

> नृत्तं वा वैणवं वाऽपि वैशाखं स्थानकं तु वा ।
> गीतवीणाविधानैश्च गन्धर्वाश्चेति कथ्यते ॥ (vv. 9–10).

They are stated to be efficient in singing etc, and form the musician party *of* the divine troupe गानादि योग्या गन्धर्वा देवाङ्गुल्यास (व गुल्मान) नार्थकम् ॥ (*ibid*). There are only two or three references to their physical appearance in the Ṛigvēda. According to III. 38, 6 *they are wind-haired* (वायुकेशान्. But vide Sāyaṇa: वायुवत् चञ्चलश्मीन्). Gandharva holds brilliant weapons (ऊर्ध्वो गन्धर्वो अधि नाके अस्थात् प्रत्यङ्चित्रा विभ्रदस्य युधानि X, 123, 7) The Atharva-Vēda is more definite on the point. The Gandharva, the husband of the Apsaras has plumage over head like the peacock, and dances sportively (आनृत्यतः शिखण्डिनः गन्धर्वस्याप्सरापतेः । A. V. V, 37, 7). He wears *brilliant* weapons and *iron* lances. (भीमा इन्द्रस्य हेतयः शतमृष्टीरयस्मयीः । ताभिर्हविरदान्गन्धर्वान वकादान्व्यृषितु ॥ *ibid* 8). They are also said to be shaggy and to have half animal forms being in many ways dangerous to men. "In the Atharvavēda, they are said to be a class of gods, hairy, like monkeys or dogs; they assume at will handsome appearances to seduce the female of this earth. Therefore, they are invoked so that they may not indulge in this sort of wrong act but live with their own wives" (T. A. Gopinatha Rao's *Hindu Iconography* Vol. II, p. 568). But this description of the Gandharvas is no where adopted by sculptors. For, their figures are not so far found characterised by the monkey or dog features. The *Vishṇudharmōttara purāṇa* III Book chapt, 42 which deals with the characteristic features of the demi-gods, the sages, the Brāhmaṇas etc., who should be portrayed as retinue of the principal deity, states that the sages, with the *Gandharvas*, the *daityas* and the *dānavas*

should be drawn in painting with the *bhadrapramāṇa*. The following verses depict their features in brief :—

ऋषयस्तत्र कर्तव्याः जटाजूटोपशोभिताः ।
कृष्णाजिनोत्तरासङ्गाः दुर्बलास्तेजसायुताः ॥ २ ॥
देवताश्चापि गन्धर्वा मुकुटेन विवर्जिताः ।
कर्तव्यास्ते महाराज शिखरैरुप शोभिताः ॥
ब्रह्मवर्चस्विनो विप्राः शुक्लाम्बरधरास्तथा ।
....
दैत्याश्च दानवाश्चैव कर्तव्या भृकुटीमुखाः ॥
वर्तुलाक्षास्तथा कार्या भीमवक्त्रास्तथैव च ।
तेषामभ्युद्धतो वेषः कर्तव्यः पृथिवी पते ॥
रु (भ) द्र प्रमाणाः कर्तव्यास्तथा विद्याधरा नृप ।
सपत्नीकाश्च ते कार्या मालालङ्कार धारिणः ।
खड्गहस्ताश्च ते कार्या गगने वाथवा भुवि ॥
मालव्य परिमाणेन किन्नरोरग राक्षसाः ।
रुचकस्य प्रमाणेन यक्षाः कार्या नराधिप ॥
शशकस्य प्रमाणेन प्रधानं मानवं लिखेत् ।
पिशाचाः वामनाः कुब्जा प्रमथाश्च महीभुजः ॥

" The sages should be shown with a cluster of matted hair, wearing the black antelope skin, weak-bodied but full of lustre. The demigods Gandharvas should be portrayed with a crown (शिखर) but without a *mukuṭa* (मुकुटेन विवर्जिताः). The Brāhmaṇas should wear white graments and bloom with lustre. The *Daityas* and the *Dānavas* should have a frowning look, round eyes and horrid faces. Their dress should accordingly be uncouth. They should be shown in the measurement of *ru* (*Bha?*) *dra* as also the Vidyādharas who should be decorated with garlands and ornaments, bear a sword in their hands, moving in the air or standing on earth. The Kinnaras, *Uragas* (snakes) and the Rākshasas should be depicted in the *Mālavya* measurement. The Yakshas should be in the *Ruchaka* measurement............The *Piśāchas* should be dwarf, and the *pramathas* hump-bodied etc. "

The specification of the measurements of the images of different demi-gods and the delineation of their features are no doubt confined in this work to the domain of painting. But as far as the description of their forms is concerned, it will be the same both in painting and sculpture. The *Matsya purāna* (chapter 259), while recommending the preparation of the images of gods for worship, in gold, silver, copper, ruby, stone, wood, iron, lead, brass, bronze and copper or auspicious wood, lays down the size and attributes of the various deities. After dealing with the figures of Vishṇu, Brahma and Śaṅkara, it is stated that god Śaṅkara should be carved with a retinue of the chiefs of Gandharvas, Vidyādharas, Kinnaras, Apsaras and Guhyakas together with groups of Mahēndras, and the Sages holding in their hands garlands of *aksha-sūtra* beads and offering Him in humility, presents of tender sprouts and flowers, and singing His praise. The verse which gives the general attributes common to all the demi-gods runs as follows :—

गन्धर्व विद्याधर किन्नराणामथाप्सरोगुह्यकनायकानाम् ।
गणैरनेकैः शतशो महेन्द्रैर्मुनिप्रवीरैरपि नम्यमानम् ॥
धृताक्षसूत्रैः शतशः प्रवाल पुष्पोपहारप्रचयं ददद्भिः ।
संस्तूयमानं भगवन्तमीड्यं नेत्रत्रयेणामरमर्त्य पूज्यम् ॥

(Chapt. 259, V. 25–26.)

While describing the images of Vishṇu and his surrounding deities, the same *purāṇa* enjoins that the *tōraṇa* (architrave) should be carved with the figures of Vidyādharas at the top and the Gandharvas with their wives, playing upon the divine drum (देव दुंदुभि). It is also recorded that the Gandharvas should be shown as attendants on the gods Brahmā, Vishṇu and Mahēśvara as well as Indra which is in conformity with their status in the scheme of the gods, being much lower than that of Indra since they are, as we have already seen, a band of musicians in Indra's heaven.

No clearer details are furnished about the physical forms of the Gandharvas in literature. Their general characteristics are music, singing and the offering of bunches of flowers as seen in the extracts given above. The same features are attributed to them in the Jaina pantheon. The Jinālaṅkāra has the following verse in Prakrit

तथा नच्चन्ति गायन्ति सेलेन्ति वादयन्ति च ।
देवाद स सहसम्हि तुट्ठत्थापो मोदितम् ॥ *i.e.*

" The gods in ten thousands make merriment, dance, sing and play on musical instruments " on which the *Jinālaṅkāra-ṭīka* adds the following gloss :—

पञ्चशिखो देवपुत्तो तिगावुतं बेळुर पण्डुवविणामादाय
बहु गन्धब्ब देवे परिवारे गन्धब्बं कुरुमानो थितो ।

(Annual Report, Archæological Survey of India for 1930–34, p. 134), meaning that the Dēvaputra Pañchaśikha plays on a bamboo flute and being surrounded by many Gandharvas and gods, is found singing (गन्धब्ब). The *Trishashṭiśalākāpurāṇa* of Hēmachandra also bears out this statement iu varse 489, describing the Gandharvas as " expert in the use of the four kinds of musical instruments always ready to perform music before you (*i.e.*, Tīrthaṅkara)". The same idea is current among the Buddhists also whose system of godhood is considerably influenced by the theology of the Hindus. This is borne out by the extant icons of deities and paintings which will be studied in a chronological order, in the next chapter.

References to Kinnaras and the female Kinnaris are not met with in the Vēdic Literature. The classical and Pauranic literature as well as the works on Hindu iconography contain the descriptions of the Kinnara figures which give a fairly good idea of the physiological features of these deties Though the lexicons equate Kinnara with Kimpurusha, the *Vāchaspatya* draws a distinction between the two on the basis of literary evidences.

As has already been pointed out, the Kinnaras are mentioned separately from the Kimpurasha in the Bhāgavata, Bhārata etc., the *Vachaspatya* adds :—

(किं पुरुषः) :— स च अश्वाकारजघनः नराकारमुखः ।
किन्नरस्तु अश्वाकारवदनः नराकारजघन इति तयोर्भेदः ।

i.e. Kimpurusha has the hips of horse and the face of man, while Kinnara has the horse face and human body. While enumerating the characteristic marks and special attributes of the images of the sun, planets and other gods in chapter 51, the *Agnipurāṇa* enjoins that the Kinnaras should be sculptured with *Viṇā* in their hands (वीणा हस्ताः किन्नराः स्युः ।). The *Mānasāra*, on the other hand, gives in chapter 58 dealing with the attributes of Yaksha, Vidyādhara etc., the following descriptive verse of the Kinnara images which materially differs from the one known from the lexicons cited above.

चरणं पशु समानं चोर्ध्वकायं तु नराभम् ।
वदन गरुडभावं बाहुकौ च पक्षयुक्तौ ॥
मकुटं कमलयुक्तं पुष्पसच्छाय वर्णम् ।
परितः करुणवीणं किन्नरस्य तु स्वरूपम् ॥

" The legs should be like those of animals, the upper body like that of man, the face like that of the Garuḍa bird, the arms furnished with wings, the crown deorated with a lotus, the complexion like the shaded flower, and the sweet lutes should be kept around them. Such are the characteristic features of the Kinnaras." Their general features which share commonly with the Yakshas, Vidyādharas etc., are briefly touched upon in the verse

द्विभुजं च द्विनेत्रं च करण्डमकुटान्वितम् ।
चरणाम्बरसंयुक्तं राक्षसाकारवद्भवेत् ॥ (*Ibid.* Vol. 2.)

i.e. " They should have two arms and two eyes, and should be furnished with the *Karaṇḍa* type of crown. Their legs should be clad in clothes and they should resemble the shape of the demon." The height of the crown of the Kinnaras should be equal to their

PLATE I

Barahut pillar. (*Page* 37)

Kanhēri, Bombay Suburban District: Cave No. 66. Buddhist-Litany.—(*Page* 33)

face or one-and-one-half of it. In the *South Indian Inscriptions* Volume II (old series), there is a reference to the setting up of a group of copper images in the Rājarājēśvara temple at Tanjore which contained two Kinnaras and two Kinnaris. The Kinnaras are stated to be solid, having two arms (and measuring) four *Viral* (fingers) in height from the feet to the hair. The two Kinnaris are similarly solid having two arms (and measuring) three *Viral* and a half in height from the feet to the hair (S. I. I. Vol. II, No. 50, vv. 5–6). The *Vishṇudharmōttarapurāṇa* devotes a few chapters for the delineation of the forms of several deities etc., in painting and records that the Kinnaras are of two kinds *viz*, (i) Those with human head and horse body and (ii) Those with human body and horse head. This does not seem to recognise a different type of the Kinnaras, called the Kimpurushas since the features of the latter are attributed to a variety of the former. The work further states that the images with horse body should be decorated with all kinds of ornaments, be full of lustre, singing, and playing on musical instruments (chapter 42, v.v. 13–15).

It may be noted that a similar description of the animal is found in the Sanskrit work Rūpāvaliya (11th century A. D.), a book of great authority for Singhalese painters. The Kinnara, according to verse 146 of the work " hath a tuft of hair on the head, a garland around the neck, a human body, and singeth melodiously ; hath a human face and hands, but the nether part, like that of a bird, with wings ; a face fair and radiant, a neck graceful as Brahmā's " (quoted from the *Mediæval Singhalese Art* by A. K. Coomaraswamy, pp. 80 ff.). Verse 138 of the same work gives the anatomical proportions of the animal as : " The two eyes are five *Kōlaka* the hair and the crowns of them are twelve Kōlaka, the neck, the chest, the navel, the private part, the thigh, the knees, the calf of the leg, the feet these are three *tāla* ".

In the man-bird form, the Kinnaras are represented at Barhut (3rd century B. C.) and mentioned by Aelian (2nd century A.D.)

as follows :— "They are matchless for the melodious notes of their throat and tongue, so that they are sirens or nearly so, for the mythical maidens so named are represented alike in the song of the poet and the picture of the artist, as winged and having the legs of brds" (*ibid*). Grünwedel reproduces a rather graceful modern Siamese drawing of the bird-woman form (*Buddhist Art in India*, English edition, 1901, p. 47).

Māgha in his *Śiśupālavadha* canto IV on the other hand, describes the amorous play of the Kinnaras in the Raivataka mountain near Dvārakā in the following verse :—

बिम्बोष्ठं बहु मनुते तुरङ्गवक्त्रश्चुम्बन्तं मुखमिह किन्नरं प्रियायाः ।
श्लिष्यन्तं मुहुरितरोऽपि तं निजस्त्रीमुत्तुङ्गस्तनभरभीरुमध्याम् ॥ 38 ॥

which is explained by Mallināthā in his gloss a relevant extract from which is given below :—

इह अद्रौ तुरंगस्य वक्त्रमिव वक्त्रं यस्य स तुरङ्गवक्त्रो देवयोनिविशेषः ॥ ......
प्रियायाः मुखं चुम्बन्तं किन्नरं मानुषमुखमश्वाङ्गं देवयोनिविशेषं बहु गुरु यथा तथा मनुते अवबुध्यते तुरङ्गवक्त्रस्य चुम्बनासंभवादिति भावः । इतरः किन्नरोऽपि .... निजस्त्रीं स्वस्त्रियं मुहुः श्लिष्यन्तं मानुषाङ्गत्वादालिंगितं तुरङ्गवक्त्रं बहु यथा तथा मनुते तुरङ्गवपुषः किन्नरस्याश्लेषासंभावादिति ।

This shows that Māgha had adopted the form of the Kinnara with a combination of horse and human features.

Thus, from the detailed examination of the literary evidences starting from the Vēdic hymns to the late classical literature of the 17th century A. D., we have found a continuous flow of identical traditions maintained by the poets and bards of the different parts of India, Ceylon, Burma etc., in regard to the conception of the physical forms of the mythical beings, the Gandharvas and Kinnaras. But a difference has been noted above in the *Mānasāra* standard and that of the *Vāchaspatya* the former adopting the fusion of bird and human parts and the latter showing the combination of human and horse parts. The

Rūpāvaliya however shows quite a different representation of the animal. These different canons of image-making have been adopted by the artists of India and the Far-east, as can be seen from the study of the typical sculptures and paintings of the Jaina, Buddhist and Hindu counter-parts of these mythical beings made in the next chapter.

CHAPTER V

A STUDY OF TYPICAL GANDHARVA AND KINNARA SCULPTURES FOUND IN INDIA, BURMA AND CEYLON

Before taking up the study of the Gandharva and Kinnara images of different historical periods found in distant parts of India, Burma, and Ceylon it is incidental to draw attention to the antiquity of the conception of composite creatures represented on stone or on seals of the pre-historic period. In his very exhaustive and illuminating volumes on Mohenjo Daro and the Indus Valley civilization, Sir John Marshall devotes a chapter on the religion of the inhabitants of the Indus Valley, in which he refers to the worship of cult objects. He observes "the evidence of Mohenjo Daro for zoolatry is far more abundant than for that of tree worship............closely akin to them, but of more complex form, are the composite creatures—part ram or goat, part bull, and part elephant—with human countenance figured on seals 378, 380 and 381, and apparently represented also in the stone images in the round illustrated in pl. C, 7 and 9". Among the animals represented, those of a definitely mythical character are composite creatures of which one is a human-faced goat or ram or possibly a more composite creature, part-goat or ram, part bull and part man. This has been suggested to be "a tutelary deity accompanying the votary into the presence of the Goddess" (Vol I, p. 66). This category of therianthropic deities includes the semi-human and semi-bovine creature attacking a horned tiger on seal No. 357, and a parallel to this may be found in the human-heaed lions of Mesopotamia "which figure so prominently in Assyrian art, and which have generally been interpreted as genii, but which in one of the cuneiform inscriptions detailing certain types of deities are described as actual gods" (*ibid*). The culture represented by the Indus finds is assigned by scholars to the period 3250 B C. to 2750 B.C. or approximately 5000 years before the present age of scientific advancement. It is interesting to note from the evidences set forth from the Vedic

and the auxiliary sources, that the Gandharvas and Kinnaras were similarly conceived to be composite creatures in pre-historic India of the Vēdic period. Whether the Mohenjo Daro civilization preceded or followed the Vcdic culture, it may be definitely asserted that there is a long continuity of tradition regarding the conception of certain gods bearing human and animal parts of body and that the Gandharvas, Kinnaras and other hybrid creatures were counted among them as cult objects of worship.

In the historic period beginning with the Mauryan, numerous specimens of these mythical beings are unearthed in the North and South India and the study of a few typical examples is made in this chapter noticing in general the lines of development of the sculptural or mural art and explaining in brief the adherence of the artists and sculptors to the textual canons embodied in the Sanskrit liturature on the subject.

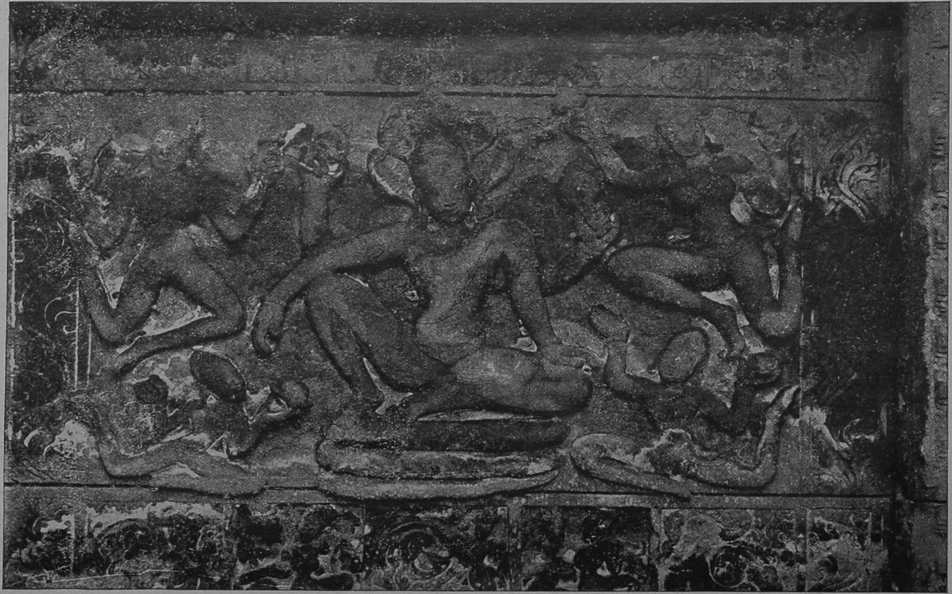
(i) The Gandharva and Kinnara figures in Gāndhāra art.

The earliest sculptures of the Demigods—Gandharvas and Kinnaras, hail from Mathura, in North India, the home of the Jaina religion in the 4th century B.C. In one panel is represented the worship of a *stūpa* by two *suparṇas*, half birds and half men and five centaurs or Kinnaras (*Ep Ind.*Vol. II, p. 319 plate IIA). One of the former offers a garland and the other as well as three of the centaurs, two on the right and one on the left, bring jars or boxes filled with flower-bunches. The last two centaurs on the left seem to carry brooms or fans made of branches. All these five figures wear turbans, such as many of the males of rank represented on Buddhist sculptures wear. A fragmentary sculpture in the Mathura Museum which is designed apparently after the Gāndhāra sculptures of the same place shows some divine or semi-divine beings in a worshipping attitude flying as indicated by the position of their legs and carrying cabbage-like bouquets from which they are showering flowers. They are muscular and robust figures wearing garments below the naval upto the anklet, the plait of the *Dhoti* flying in folds and the

upper garment flying in the air over the shoulders with the swift movement of their body through the sky. Their hair is tied in knot into a tapering crown with braid on the edge and they are decorated with a necklace (see plate LVI on p. 159 of the Annual Report, Archæological Survey of India, 1906–07). They are evidently the Gandharvas heading towards the Buddha with offerings of flowers in their hands. In the *Tōraṇa* architraves in the Indraśaila cave at Mathura is represented the episode of Śakra's visit to Buddha to whose proper right is standing the Gandharva Pañchaśikha recognisable from his harp. He is followed by six female figures probably nymphs (*apsaras*) of Indra's heaven of whom the first seems to beat time, the second and forth have their hands joined in adoration and the remaining three carry each a garland and a bunch of flowers as offerings. On the other side of the cave stands Indra himself (A. S. R. 1909–10, p. 74 pl. XXVII b). Here again, the functions and cognisances of the Gandharvas and their wives the *Apsaras*, are given according to the Buddhist canons. Other representation of Indra's visit to the Buddha with the figure of the Gandharva Pañchaśikā playing upon a harp are found on a fragmentary stone excavated at Takht-i-Bahi by D. B. Spooner (A. S R., 1907–08 pp. 141–42, plate XLIV, b) and on the illustration given by A. Foucher reproducing a sculpture from Loriyana Tangai preserved in the Indian Museum, Calcutta (*ibid* p 142). Among the subjects of Kushan sculptures, a common representation is the visit of Indra to Buddha in the Indraśaila cave. A part of frieze on *Tōraṇa* beam at Mathura represents a three tiered *stūpa* with trees on either side of it and pairs of *suparṇas* (harpies) and Kinnaras (centaurs) bringing offerings and garlands. The offering bearing scenes are very common; particularly short and stout male figures groaning under the weight of big garlands are abundantly in evidence in all early sculptures. The *Supaṛṇas* and *Kinnaras* mentioned above strictly conform to their descriptions given in a previous chapter. It may be noted that the Kinnara has the horse body and human bust carrying a basket of

PLATE III

Nāgārjunakoṇḍa, Guntur District: Carved slab representing a stūpa with standing figure of Buddha preaching.— (*Pages* 33 & 41)



Aihoḷe, Bijapur District: Old temple belonging to Huchchappayya. Ceiling sculpture Vishṇu on Ananta. (*Page* 34)

offerings in his hands (*A History of Fine Art in India and Ceylon* by V. A. Smith : plate 15, A). These garland-bearers (see, for a graphic representation of the scene, the undulating roll motif on coping of rail at Amarâvati, figured as pl. 23–B, *ibid*, facing page 48) are apparently the Gandharvas whose special duty is music, singing and offering of flower-garlands to the deity on which they attend. For the freshness, vigour and simplicity of expression they are unparalleled and belong to the primitive period of sculptural art in India. The Amarâvati Stūpa where the sculptures of various designs and descriptions illustrating the Buddhist Jātaka scenes are recovered, belongs to about 200 B.C. to which period the above-mentioned motif should naturally belong. Similar garland bearing figures are found at Taxila where three *stūpas* ranging in date from the Śaka-Pahlava period to the 1st century A.D. have been excavated (Excavation at Taxila, A S.R., for 1915–16, p. 5–6 and pl. V-J). It is noteworthy that the stalwart figures carrying over their shoulders thick garlands are dressed in long shirts and that the alternate figures are furnished with wings being probably the *Suparṇas* as stated in a previous case. Their characterstic music is also represented in early Buddhist art of the 2nd Century B.C. to 4th century A.D. as noticed in the suclptures of Pañchaśikha and his retinue who acted as choristers to Buddha on the occasion of Indra's visit to him. The Gandharvas in flight are also sculptured on the *stūpas* of Amarâvati and Nāgārjunkoṇḍa, the latter belonging to about the 2nd century A.D.

(ii) The Gandharva and Kinnara figures in Gupta, Chalukya and Pallava art.

In the Śiva temple at Bhumara which is assigned to the middle of the 5th century A.D. (*Memoir* No. 16 of the *Archæological Survey of India*, p. 3), the doorway of the *Garbhagriha* is decorated with the figures of Gangā and Yamunā standing on their respective vehicles *viz. Makara* and *Kūrma*, and other standing figures on the door jamb. On the horizontal bar at the top

are seen six flying figures—three on each side of the bust of Śiva in the centre, carrying in their left hands a tray full of flowers. They wear a wig on their head and seem to have decorated it with garlands. They are equipped with waist-band and an under garment below the navel which is seen flying in the air. They are sparsely dressed and scantily decorated which is a characteristic of the sculptures of the early period. The art expresses itself in all its vigour of child-hood and the sculptures found in the Buddhist or Hindu environments are potent with the sentiments of the scene depicted or the idea intended to be conveyed by the artist.

It should not, however, be presumed that the early sculptors were not acquainted with the varieties of dress and ornaments to be shown on the figures carved by them. Far from it. In certain cases where the occasion required the introduction of exuberance of decorative art, every attention is paid to its delineation without getting steriotyed or conventionalised. They bestowed primary care to the *expression* in preference to *decroation*. This characteristic continued to mark the sculptures during the whole of the early period upto 8th century A. D. when conventionalism began to appear in art. These remarks apply in full to the figures and stone images of the Kadamba and Chālukya periods in the Dekkan, of the Gupta period in the north and of the Pallava period upto, Rājasimha III in the south.

Of the early Chalukyan period, it is worthwhile noticing in brief the two pairs of Gandharva figures kept on a raised platform near the front gateway of the Durgā temple at Aihoḷe. They are boldly executed beautiful pairs flying through the clouds, as the position of their legs and body indicates. They are dressed upto the knee and the male figure is furnished with *udarabandha* while the *kaṭibandha* is shown for both male and female. In the case of one pair, the male who is dressed in *chaḍḍi* (short pant) tied by a lace (*nāḍī*) wears an under-garment which drops loose in front but is tied at the back. The female figure is evidently the *apsaras* the wife of the

Gandharva. *One Gandharva is holding a bowl full of liquor in* his hand and appears to cajol his consort to partake of it which she is unwilling to do. In the second case, the male and female are in agreement and conjointly flying in the air. Though the figures are here decorated with ornaments more profusely than the sculptures of the earlier periods noticed above, their variety is limited to the domain of facts and the whole atmosphere impresses one with the conditions of actual life (see plate). That the Gandharvas are fond of drink is borne out in this sculpture by the representation of a bowl in their hands. It may be noted that the Gandharvas in both the cases wear long and tapering *kirīṭas* studded with precious jewels. These pairs belong to the 7th century A.D. *i.e.* to the early Chlāukyan period.

A considerable variety in the delineation of the Gandharva figures is found in the sculptures in the temples of Viruāpāksha, Mallikārjuna and Pāpanātha at Pattadakal which furnish the best specimens of temple architecture of the early Chalukyan period. The pillars in the central hall of the Mallikārjuna temple bear beautiful icons of flying Gandharvas profusely decorated with ornaments and holding musical instruments or weapons in their hands. They are invariably found in company with their consorts, the *Apsaras*, and playing upon a stringed musical instrument. The Gandharva is adorned with a crown, wears an ear—ornament, neck-lace set with precious stones, and arm-lets and holds a tray full of fruits in the right hand. He is also furnished with *udara-bandha* (stomach belt) and *Kaṭibandha* (waist-belt) and puts on a folded under-garment tied on either side of the hips, with the skirts let loose in profusion. The *Apsara* is similarly decorated, but she holds two lotuses with long stalk in her two hands. In some cases, the Gandharva holds erect, a sword in one hand and a shield in the other and is portrayed in a fighting pose while flying. In the *Nandimaṇḍapa* in front of Virūpāksha temple, he is seen, peculiarly enough, worshipping a miniature shrine with god inside, represented in different styles of temple

architecture. (*cf.* the *Gandharvas* and *Kinnars* worshipping the Buddhist stupa at Barahut, Sanchi etc.). The various types of *gopuras* shown on these miniature shrines are interesting in so far as they bear ample testimory to the adoption and assimilation of the northern and southern standards of *gōpuras* by the architects of Karnatak in the beginning of the 8th century A.D. It is worth noticing that in the midst of the worshipping Gandharvas is figured a ten-headed Rāvaṇa in the act of lifting up a miniature shrine, evidently Kailāsa of Iśvara.

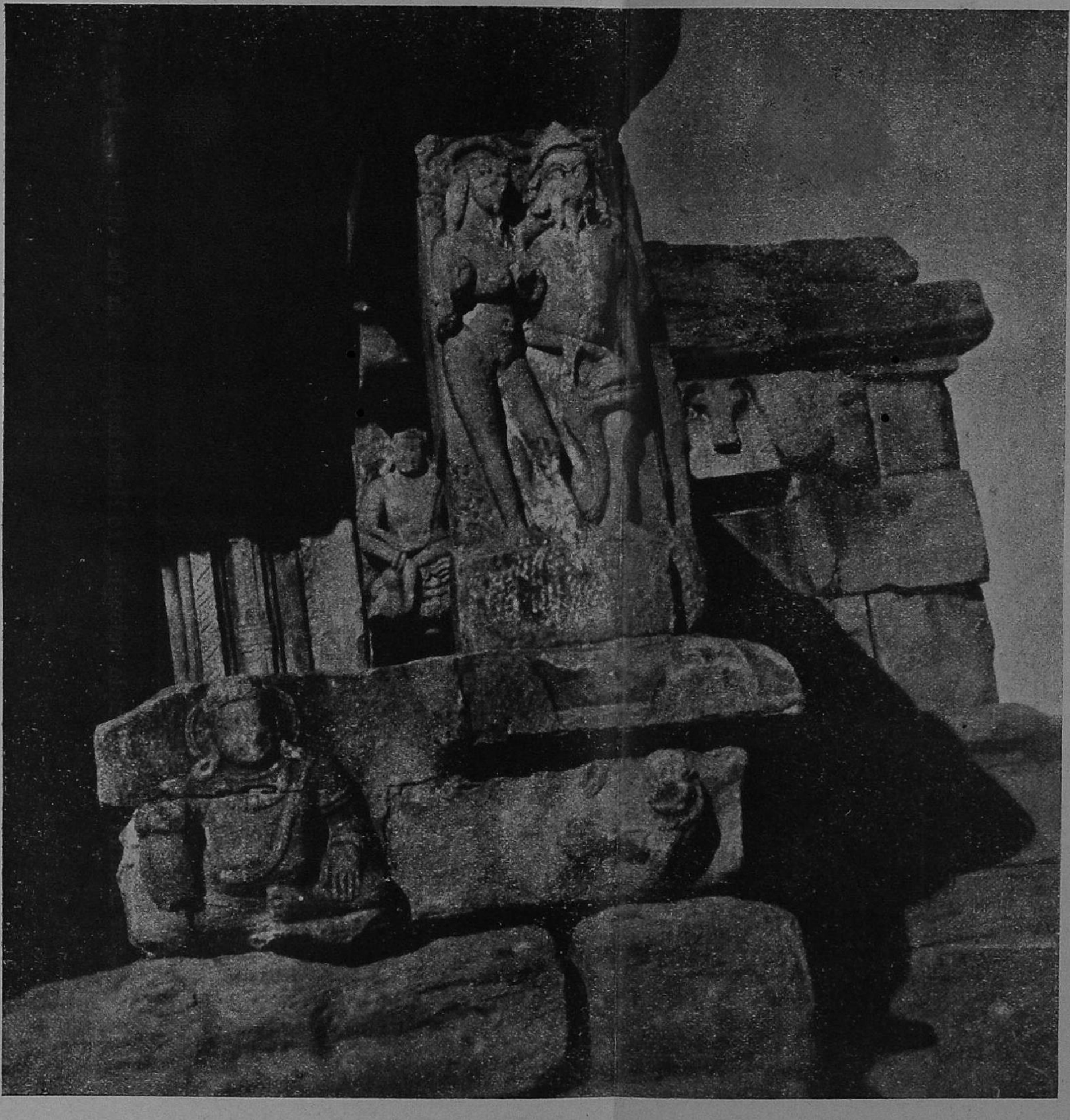
Thus, the study of the early Chalukyan sculptures at the historic places of Badami, Pattadakal and Aihole lays bare the following characteristic features of the *Gandharvas. viz*; (1) Their flying pose in the region of the air, (2) being flanked or accompanied by the Apsaras, (3) holding in their hands (*a*) offerings of flowers and fruits in trays, (*b*) a sword and shield in a fighting attitude; They are (4) profusely decorated with a crown set with pearls and precious stones and other ornaments and (5) are dressed in *chaḍḍi* and long flowing under-garments. In some cases, they are also found (6) in the act of playing upon stringed musical instruments or (7) of worshipping a god in miniature shrines. Among these, their chief distinctive mark is their fiying pose in the act of offering flowers or fruits, thus indicating their habitation to be the region of the sky as determined from the literary texts quoted in a previous chapter. This is depicted in all the subsequent representations of the demi-gods, the exceptions being found in a remarkable measure in the plaques recovered at Paharpur noticed below.

A similar feature is observable in the sculptures of the East coast also. A portion of a frieze in the upper verandah of the Rani Gumpha in the Hathi Gumpha caves in Orissa, shows a man in a conventional running or dancing attitude dressed in a *dhoti* and a scarf and holding in one hand a tray of garlands and flowers and in the other, some lotus stalks bearing flower buds and leaves. He had turban on his head and ornaments and flowers on

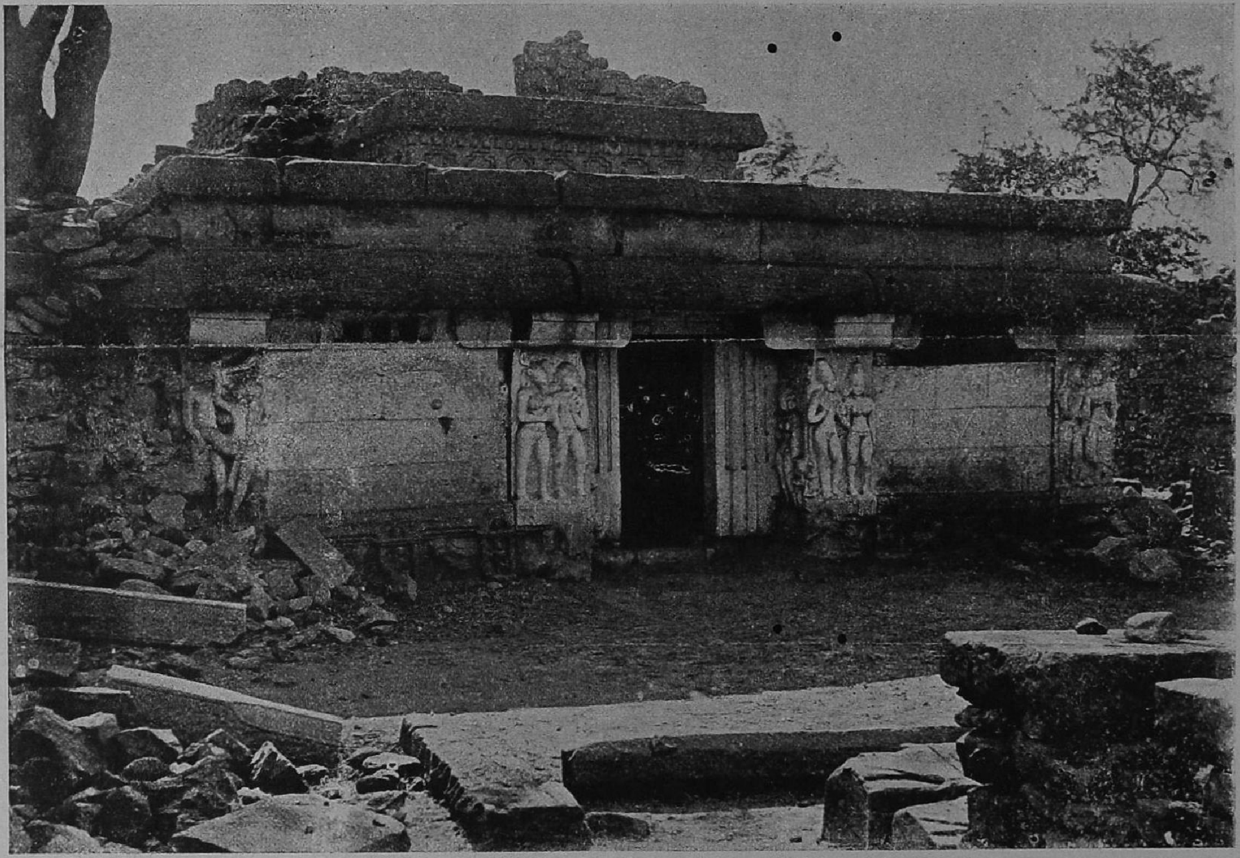
Aihoḷe, Bijapur District: Gandharva panel kept in the Durgā temple. —(*Page* 36)

PLATE VI

Aihoḷe, Bijapur District: Durgā temple, three sculptured slabs on south side—(*Page* 36)

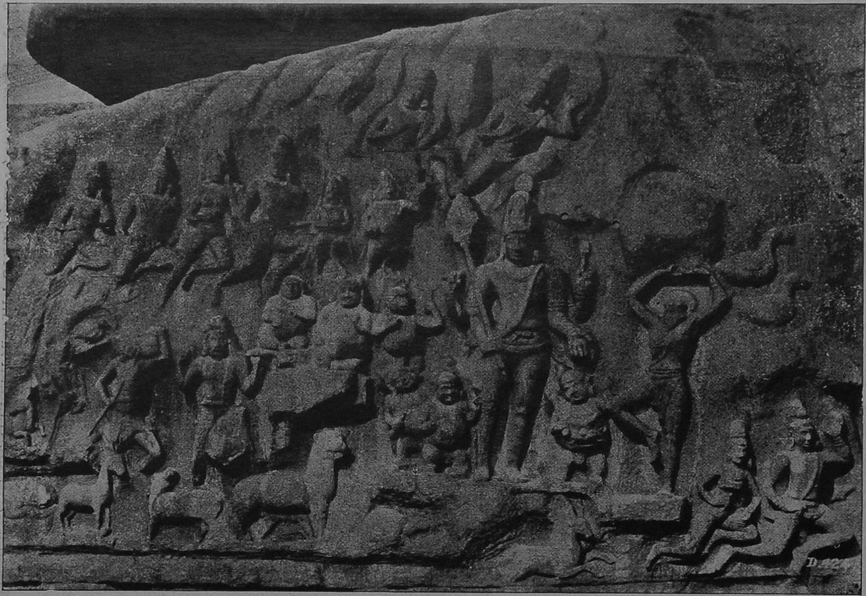


Aihoḷe, Bijapur District : Sculptures in a temple in the field.—(*Page* 36)



Aihoḷe, Bijapur District : Old temple belonging to Huchchappayya in the village.—(*Page* 36)

Bādāmi, Bijapur District : Gandharva pair : Ceiling panel, cave No. 1—(*Page* 36)



Mahābalipuram, Chingleput District: Details from Arjuna's penance.—(*Page* 37)

the head, ears and neck. The offerings in his hands are apparently intended for Buddha emblematically represented on the other side of the arch by the elephants crouching in cave (The *Antiquities of Orissa*, vol. II, by R. L. Mitra, plate VI A. and plate VII, A 2.)

The cave temples of Ellora ranging in date from the 8th to the 10th century A.D. which are dedicated to the Buddhist, Jaina and Brahmanical faiths, are replete with the representations of these demi-gods depicted as flying with a tray of offerings in their hands or playing upon cymbals, drums and other musical instruments.

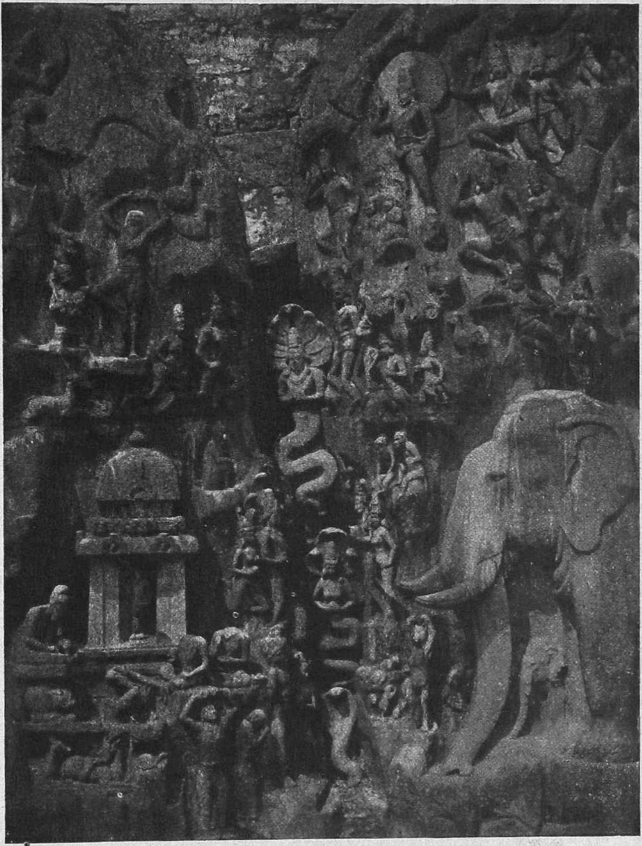
A study of the Gandharva figures in the Umā-Māhēśvara temple at Gurgaj, a mound at Gurgi in the Rewa plate and in the palace of the Thakur of Sohagpur, exhibits that the Gandhasvas wear a long cap-like *Muguṭa* fastened on the forehead by strings of flowers or pearls and their consorts have no *Kirīṭa* but have a close cap-like cover tied by a garland of flowers. In one case, even the Gandharva wears a cap-like *Kirīṭa*. They bear in their left hands a jug-like vessel full of offerings.and are seen flying in the air with a garland of flowers in one hand. The temple and the sculptures are referable to the 11th or 12th century A.D. (see *The Haihayas of Tripuri* and *Their Mounments* by R. D, Banerji *Arch Survey Memoir* No. 23). As noticed above, the Gandharva should be, according to the *Vishṇudharmmōttarapurāṇa,* depicted without a crown but embellished with a braid of hair. The cap-like cover for the head is apparently the closely knit and neatly arranged hair which is seen hanging loose over the shoulders or brimming in curls below the ears as in the Aihole sculptures described above. The various ornaments mentioned in the *Mānasāra*. chapt, L, vv. 292-302) are discernible in the figures, in part or in full.

In the Pallava art which is typically illustrated in the Mahabalipuram sculptures of the 8th century A.D. a large number of Gandharvas in pairs are carved in the single sculptures at *Pāṇḍava Rathas*, the Jalaśayana temple, the Gōvardhana panel and lastly in

the boulder depicting the penance of Bhagīratha for the descent of the Ganges (known erroneously as Arjuna's penance). Here they are shown with short crowns, flying in the air towards the flow of the currents of the Ganges, with bunches of flowers in their hands. But in these cases, the Gandharvas are not usually depicted in their capacity as musicians at Indra's court. Their features are commonly described in their human form without a supernatural or fabulous air about them.

(iii) The Gandharva and Kinnara figures in mediaeval art.

The richest collection of the demi-gods comes from Pahārpur an ancient site in Bengal. The figures are *terra cotta* and are delineated in numerous plaques as flying either singly or with the Vidyādharas or the Apsarasas their female counter-parts (see the *Arch. Survey Memoir*, No. 55, Excavation at Paharapur-Bengal, p. 62 ff.). Among the semi-divine and semi-human subjects treated by the Paharpur artist, the Gandharvas, Kinnaras, Vidyādharas, Kīrtimukhas or lion faces and Nāgas are noteworthy. The Gandharvas are depicted with their legs covered by lotus-shaped boots, turned upwards in the act of flight, their bodies floating in space. In some cases, they hold a sword and a noose or a garland of flowers in their hands (see plate) In one plaque the Gandharva is represented as letting loose a broken necklace, the pearls dropping on the floor in a heap (see plate). It is surprisingly interesting that the Gandharva is found in one instance as riding on rhinoceros (see plate) which feature is rarely met with in other figures of the deity. The Kīrtimukhas whose origin may be traced to the fertile decorative genius of the Indus valley artist whose productions in *terra cotta* objects are marvellously conventional and hybrid in character with various kinds of human and animal combinations, are very common in Indian architrave and their auspicious character is usually indicated by the issue of strings of pearls or lotuses from their mouths. They lend a supernatural air to the structures and the impression receives further strength by the introduction, along-



Mahābalipuram, Chingleput District : Details from Arjuna's penance.—(*Page* 38)

Rajashahi, Paharpur, *Terra-cotta* plaque, showing the Gandharva with necklace unstrung.—(*Page* 38)

PLATE XIII

Rajashahi, Paharpur *Terra-cotta* plaque, showing Gandharva riding Rhinoceros —(*Page* 38)

PLATE XIV

Rajshahi, Paharpur, *Terra-cotta* plaque showing Gandharva holding sword and noose.—(*Page* 38)

side, of the Gandharva and other semi-divine figures on the walls of the temple, Hindu, Buddhist or Jaina, or as attendants on the central deity. Of the different features ascribed to the Gandharvas in the Pahārpur collection, the wearing of lotus-covers or boots, riding on a rhinoceros, carrying erect a sword are of uncommon occurence. The lotus-covers to the legs are, it may be observed, usually shown in the figures of the sun-god and his attendants (cf. *eg.*, the images of the sun near the Gokak falls and at Elephanta). It has been noticed above that the Aihole and Pattadkal sculptures of the 7th–8th century A.D. also represented these semi-divine beings as flying with swords held erect in their hands. This feature is likewise found in the earliest paintings of the Dekkan. The fresco-paintings at Ajanta and Badami (cave No. 3 –back of front Cave) exhibit very beautiful drawings of the Gandharvas with graceful pose and refined expression. On plate XXIV of the Ajanta paintings, part I, p. 29, on the left side of the fresco at the top are noticed two flying figures (*gandharvas*) one male and the other female. The upper parts of their body are missing; but the lower ones are in tact and show them floating in the air The male *Gandharva* holds in his right hand a sword erect while in the left was perhaps a trumpet, but this is not clear now The female figure has clasped the shoulder of her mate and supported thereby, is drifting in the air. Again in the plate XXXIII b, in the upper part of the fresco, above the blocks of conventional hills, a Gandharva and a pair of other celestial beings may be seen flying in clouds. They are bringing flowers on trays made of leaves for presentation to the Bōdhisatva. Thus, the characteristic marks of flight through the mid-region with trays of offerings or musical instruments in their hands to do service to the deity on whom they attend are respected by the ancient artists irrespective of the faith to which they may have belonged.

The same iconographical features of the demi-gods are adopted in the figures carved in the temples of the 12th century A. D. and onwards and specific examples may be quoted in large

numbers from the south as well as north India (see for example the Kasi Visvesvara temple at Lakkundi, Doddabasappa temple at Dambal and the temples in the ruins of Hampi and Vijayanagara in the Bellary District of the Madras Presidency).

(iv) The Kinnara figures in the prehistoric and historic periods.

Let us now turn to the examination of Kinnara and Kinnari figures whose association with the Gandharvas in the divine orchestra is well known. It may be observed in conformity with the literary evidences quoted already that the chief functions of the Gandharvas consisted usually in serving the main deity by their vocal songs and offerings of flowers and fruits while those of the *Kinnaras*, were to please him by playing upon musical instruments. A minute study of the Kinnara figures in ancient sculptures and paintings adds to our knowledge of their iconography by a few interesting details which are explained below.

The idea of a fabulous representation of composite creatures—part ram or goat, part bull and part elephant—with human countenance is current in the art-productions of prehistoric India. Stone images and *terra cotta* sealings recovered from the prehistoric sites of Mohenjo Daro and Harappa bear ample testimony to the prevalence of worship of cult gods in all common and uncommon forms. A specific section of these hybrid figures with a combination of human, horse or bird parts was known to the ancients as Kinnaras whose iconographical features as gathered from the technical literature on the subject have been studied in detail in a previous chapter. In the historic period *i.e.* from the early Mauryan age onwards, the icons of the Kinnaras and Kinnaris are found cut on the temple walls or separately as attendants on the main deity whether of the Buddhist, Jaina or Hindu faith and they exemplify different iconographical standards which the artists of the times adopted in their art productions.

In the Buddhist *stupas* at Sanchi, Barahut etc., of the 3rd century B.C. the man-bird form of the Kinnaras is much in

evidence on the railing pillars and stone beams. They are equipped with wings and are likely to be confounded with the *Suparṇas* who are intimately associated with the Buddhist *stupa.* But in many cases, they are represented with human busts and bird legs only, carrying on their shoulders heavy long garlands of flowers as an offering to the Buddha. The Mathura sculptures of the same period and the Amaravati carvings and figures ranging in date from the 2nd century B. C. to the 2nd century A. D. exemplify the same characteristic mark of man-bird combination. They show them hopping on their short birds' legs, in the act of adoring a *stupa* with a tray of offerings in hand. Among the Bodh-Gaya sculptures occur various fantastical hybrid creatures, winged lions and oxen, a centaur, a horse-headed female or Kinnari (*A History of Fine Art in India and Ceylon,* plate 9, fig. F.) The antiquites of the Nagarjunakoṇḍa *stupas* belonging to the 2nd-3rd centnry A.D. contain many fat-bellied, human-bodied and bird-legged figures carrying a thick garland for the worship of the Buddha seated in a circular niche *between* two such figures (plate). These and similar figures are considered to represent the Kinnaras. In Java, Siam and Ceylon, also the same features are observable in the Kinnara figures. It may, however, be pointed out that the horse-man combination is likewise met with frequently in the Nagarjunikonda sculptures. In the extreme left of the scene on plate XXXIII, *a, b* is seen a couple of which the lady dressed to the thigh and standing by the side of her husband has a horse face In a similar manner, the horse-faced lady is portrayed in a section (right) of another panel (*The Buddhist Antiquities of Nagarjunikoṇḍa,* Arch. Survey Memoir, No 54, plate XXXIII, *a, b*). Both these figures represent the Kinnaris and the lovers by their side are the Kinnaras or human beings. A study of the paintings at Ajanta on the other hand, reveals a different result. The Gandharvas, and Kinnaras being closely connected with music and song, the fresco of Bōdhisatva Padmapāṇi shows two Kinnaras on the left side, right below the Gandharvas, who have human busts and

bird's legs and claws. The long dark lines of *surma* (eye-powder) is very prominent in the corner of their eyes. One of them is playing on a harp. (*The Ajanta Paintings* part I p. 29 and Plate XXIV, edited by G. Yazdani). In another scene, two Kinnaras appear with the same iconographical features. They are dwarfish in size and have the bust of a human being and the wings and tail of a bird. One of these is playing on a blue flute, while the other is apparently beating time with cymbals. The hair of the flute-player cut short on the fore-head is dressed in a charming way with a matted effect. The wings of these quaint creatures are shown by whitish dots, but the tails are realistic and resemble those of the male birds of the domestic fowl. (*Ibid*, part II, p. 3–5). Thus, we find that the Buddhist art of the ancient period adopted both the standards which likewise appear to have been respected by the artists of the later periods irrespective of their religious faith. Vincent Smith seems to make a distinction between the Kinnaras and the Kinnaris by assigning horse features to the former and bird combinations to the latter (*A History of Fine Art in India and Ceylon, by V.A. Smith*- p. 33). This however, is not founded on facts. For, even the female Kinnaris are represented with horse marks, in conformity with their description in literature (see e. g. the *Sisupālavadha* canto *IV*, v. 32. quoted above). It may be borne in mind that the Buddhist literature usually delineates the Kinnaris with man-bird combinations and the wall paintings in the Abeyadana temple at Pagan, Burma, of the 11th century A.D. illustrate this in the representation of the scenes from the *Maha-Ummagga Jātakas* (No. 546 of V. Fausboll's vol VI, p. 422, see also Cowell's *Translation of the Jātakas* Vol. VI, p 217), according to which a hermit saved the life of a young Kinnari by killing a spider which was living on the blood of the Kinnaris. The hermit is stated to have fallen in love with the *Kinnari* and lived with her after killing the blood-suckling spider (*Arch. Survey Report* for 1930–34, part one, p. 183 and part two plate C II, d).

The amorous nature of the Kinnaris (cf. Amara I, 11)is brought out prominently in the sculptures of Aihole belonging to the 7th—8th century A. D. While describing the Raivataka mountain, Magha has hinted in the verse quoted above that the horse-faced Kinnaras were eager to embrace the Kinnaris of human body but were disappointed in kissing them on account of their queer shape. That they were noted for their loving and passionate nature can be made out from the following sculptures found at Aihole.

The front *maṇḍapa* of the Ladkhan temple at Aihole belonging roughly to the middle of the 6th century A D. has on one of the pillars a beautiful representation of a Kinnari with horse-face. She is standing by the side of a human figure under the shelter of a plantain tree. He is holding in his left raised hand a bowl of liquor, while the Kinnari is dragging him to her side by the necklace worn by him. Here the Kinnari shows a long mellow mane dropping from her neck and is graceful in appearance and pose. Similarly in the Durgā-temple (6th century A.D.) at the same place, are carved two life size figures on a pillar, of which one is a human faced male dressed in *langoṭi* (square piece of cloth) and holds in his left hand raised aloft, a bowl evidently of liquor, while the other a horse-faced Kinnari drags him by the necklace to her side for a close embrace. That the Kinnaris used to seduce men of this world who had taken to a life of penance is evidenced from the sculptures at the Huchchappayyana maṭha at Aihole. The horse-faced Kinnari showing her long soft mane dropping from her neck is seen naked in an amorous pose by the side of a human faced ascetic who wears only a *langoṭi* like *Bairāgi* and holds a rosary in his hand. Both the figures are standing under the foliage of a bower. A piller in the front porch of the Huchappayyanagudi in Survey No. 270 on the Malaprabha river, bears the representation of a sage completely seduced by the Kinnarī. Here also the horse-faced Kinnarī is standing nude with a creeper in her hands putting her right hand over the shoulder of a sage close by who in turn puts

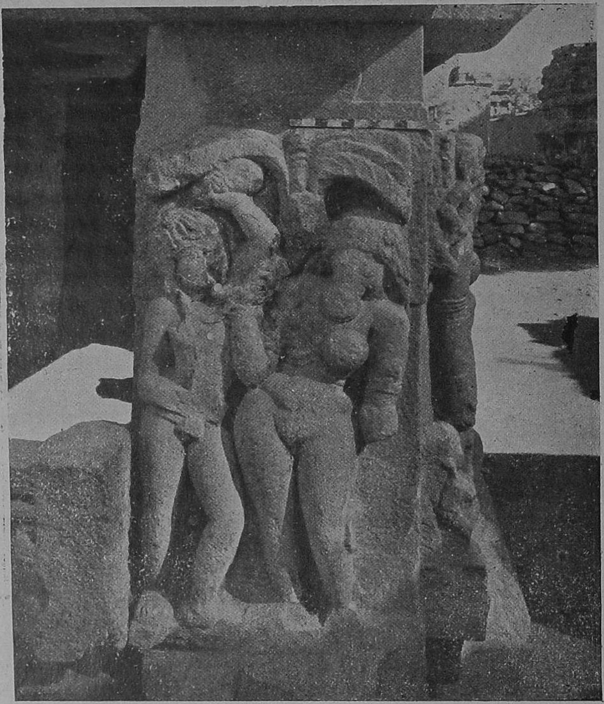
his left hand behind her back so as to touch her private parts. The sage has a long beard and is dressed in *dhōti*. Again, on another pillar in the same porch, a Kinnari is figured nude holding a bunch of mango fruits in her hand. The sage by her side wears a long *Vāsudēva* type cap like Bairāgis and has a long beard. He is dressed in a short *chaḍḍi*. In all these figures, the partner is a human being, a sage or an ascetic and the horse-faced figure is no doubt a Kinnari who appears to take delight in the seduction of sages and house holders.

The man-bird form of the Kinnara and Kinnarī was not unknown to the Hindu artist. In the Kailāsanāthasvāmin temple at Conjeeveram is a sculpture of Siva with eight hands dancing in a *lalita-tilaka* pose and to his immediate left is Nandi also dancing, but in the *lalita* mode. Immediately to the right is a Kinnara half-man and half-bird playing apparently on a stringed instrument (*The Elements of Hindu Iconography*, by T.G. Rao, p. 266).

A sketch from Ramesvaram in the Cudappah District illustrates a female Kinnarī (plate). She has a human bust with protruding breasts and has her hair arranged with a dividing line on the forehead, dressed into a well-knit knot at the back. She holds a stringed musical instrument across her breast, with its broad base touching the lower part of her bird-shaped form. The figure is embellished with short wings and legs of an eagle. (*The south Indian Gods and Goddesses*, by H. K. Sastri. fig. 154), The figure, though not apparently an ancient one represents the type of a female *Kinnarī* according to the canons of ancient works on inconography. The panel of a *Kinnarī* on a pillar of Kalyāṇa-maṇḍapam near the temple of Kṛishṇa at Udayagiri Nellore District, shows a charming sculpture of a Kinnara with the feathered wings of a bird and legs of an eagle. The figure has a man's bust, the head being decorated with a *kirīṭa*. It is a perfect piece of art of the mediaeval period *i.e.* of the 11th and 12th century A.D. and thus proves that this type of the Kinnara figures was recognised by the

Dharwar: Kannada Research Institute ; Gandharva playing on a musical instrument.—(*Page* 38)

PLATE XVI



Aihoḷe, Bijapur District: Ladkhan Temple, Two standing human figures, one clearly horse-headed in the act of attack and defence.—(*Page* 43)

Hindu artists in ancient times. Again, in the Kannada Research Museum-Dharwar, there is a beautiful wooden image of a female Kinnarī with protruding breasts, embellished with gem-set ear-ornaments, a series of neck-laces of pearls and precious stones and with a fine *makuṭa* on the head, which is tied like a turban with strings of pearls arranged in a charming fashion. The lower part is that of an eagle with a short feathered foliage of wings. The figure also wears a long garland of flowers hanging upto the ankle. She holds a lotus bud in her left hand, the right hand being broken at the wrist. The specimen may be assigned to the post Vijayanagara period or roughly to the 17th century A. D. The type of Kinnarā known to the Singhalese artists was also of the man-bird form. He is called *Kindura* or *Kinduro* by the Singhalese and Dr. A. K. Coomaraswamy reproduces in the figure of a male *Kindura*, from the lid of Kandyan brass box in his possession, who with his mate is dancing and playing, unconcious of danger (*the Mediæval Singhalese Art*, Chapter IV, pp. 80 ff, by A. K. Coomaraswamy). Besides this find, he refers to two other sorts of Kindura recognished by Kandyan painters, namely sanda-Kindura, altogether human in form with wings like an angel and the jala-Kindura of which the former is rarely seen in Kandyan work. Grünwedel reproduces a rather graceful modern Siamese drawing of the bird-woman form of the Kinnara (*The Buddhist Art in India*, English edition, 1901, p. 47). Dr. Coomaraswamy observes in his excellent note on the *Kindurā* (*The Mediæval Singhalese Art* p. 80) that the Kindurō of Singhalese painters, are beings, human above and bird-like below ; like a siren or a harpy but with human arms and shoulders, and the wings not large enough for flight (*ibid*, fig. 10)......... There has been some confusion as to the meaning of the word Kindura. The meaning given by Monier Williams (*Skt. Dict.*) is a being of the centaur type, half horse, half man and he is presumably followed by Dawson (*Hindu Mythology* p. 158) and Pincott (Prema sagara, 1897, pp. 16, 232). I do not know how the confusion arose.............. The type of Kindurā known to Kandyan artists is, then, the true

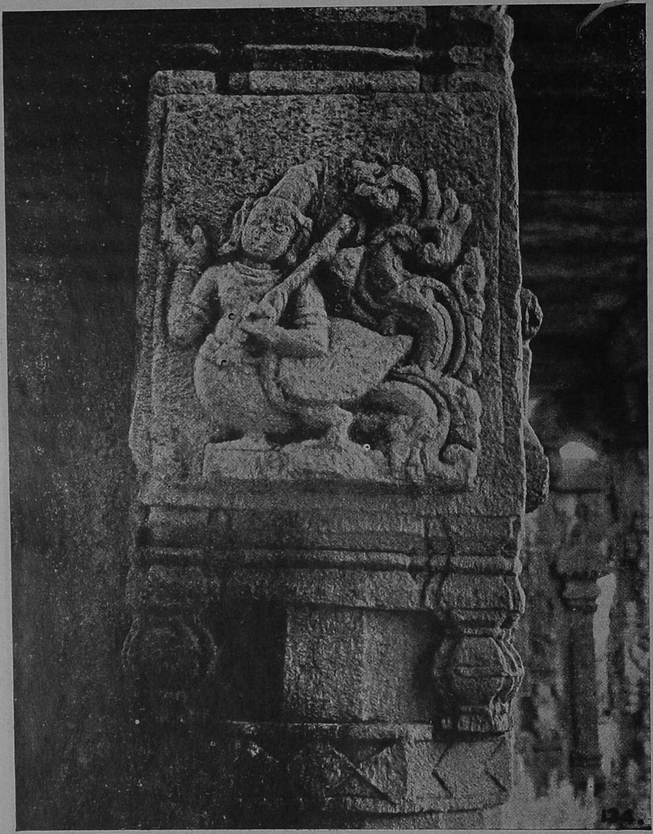
Rajashahi, Paharpur, Stone image showing a Kinnara pair in wall.—(*Page* 46)

PLATE XVIII

Dharwar: Kannada Research Institute:
Wooden image of Kinnari.—(*Page* 45)

Nellore : Nellore District : Sculpture of a Kinnarī on a pillar.–(*Page* ;6)

PLATE XX



Udayagiri, Nellore District, Panel of a Kinnari on a pillar of Kalyāṇa maṇḍapam near Kṛishṇa temple.—(*Page* 44)

tecture for decorative purposes. According to the *Mānasāra*, the carvings of crocodiles and female *Kinnaras* with flower designs and various ornaments characterise the arch called *Pushpa-tōraṇa* whereas the *Ratna-tōraṇa* should bear the decorations of the nine gems with the figures of crocodiles and *Kinnaras* (Chapter XLVI, vv 53-61). The temple cars and chariots should be embellished with the nude paintings and carvings of the best heavenly women without any clothes on them and representing on their limbs all their emotions. They should also bear the carvings of the door-keepers, the Yakshas, Kinnaras, Garuḍa etc., (*ibid*. chapt. XLIII vv. 159-160 and 167-68). The Gandharva pairs, Vidyādharas etc., are usually found in the upper region of the temple or sculptured panels in conformity with their flying nature. Thus the introduction of the figures of these demi-gods may in some cases be attributed to the decorative purposes though in most circumstances they have a definite part to play in the story depicted in sculpture or painting.

The hybrid and fabulous combinations of human and animal or bird forms have resulted in numerous types of deities in Indian mythology. The most important of these are the Kinnaras noticed in the previous chapters, Hayagrīva, Varāha and Narasiṁha the *avatāras* of Vishṇu, Tuṁbaru divine musician, the twin gods Aśvins, Nāgas, and Nāgiṇis, Nandi, Mahishāsura, Daksha-prajāpati, Vyāghrapāda Patañjali, Gajānana, Hanumān, Garuḍa etc. etc., All these deities are worshipped in suitable images in ancient temples and they are described as to their forms and functions in the Great Epics the Rāmāyaṇa and Mahābhārata and the Purāṇas and Āgamas. This idea of a fabulous combination is common to all religions in the world and even the Jainas and Buddhists have borrowed it in their pantheons. As at Paharpur, numerous scenes from the Buddhist legends are depicted on the pillars and pilasters of the ruined stone temple near the Monastery site No. 7 at Nālandā, Barhat, Sāñchi, Amarāvati and Nāgārjunakoṇḍa. At Nālandā appear Kinnaras, human-headed birds with foliated tails and *makara* designs. The

Suparṇas are common in Buddhist *stūpas*. Among the carvings on the *stūpa* at Nāgārjunakoṇḍa is found a human-faced and lion (or horse)-bodied figure surmounting the *stūpa* and turning the face at its back (*Rupūm*, April–July 1929, fig. 1, slab representing a complete *stūpa*, Nāgārjunakoṇḍa Metropolitan Museum). It may be noted that the Gōmukha-Yaksha with a bovine or horse's head is the attendant of the first Tīrthankara Ādinātha, among the Jainas.

It is worth noticing that the hellenic mythology and art also recognise the existence of composite animals of which the most common are the centaurs, Kentaurcs, cherubs, sphinx and chiron (half-man, half-horse). Even in royal personages such curious combinations of animal and human limbs have been conceived in Greek history. Midas is a royal name which appears more than once in the onomestics of Greece and Asia-Minor. According to the legend, Midas had the ears of an ass. The Macedonian Midas was the son of Gordias and the Midas of Phrygia was the son of Gordios. It deserves to be noted that in the 3rd century A. D., the Phrygian of Niece stamped a coin in honour of emperor Gordianus Piu, which displays a man sitting on a horse having a man's leg. The medal bears the following legend 'the horse with a man's leg of the Naceans.' The unanimity of the literary as well as historical traditions all over the world leads to the unmistakable surmise that such queer-shaped creatures were not merely the figment of poet's imagination but had a real existence in the world.

It has been suggested by students of comparative mythology that the Greek Kentauros, Iranian Gandharewa, and Indian Gandharva betray a common conception and are connected with each other etymologically. They also seek to identify Gandharva with Gardabha (ass) on the ground that Gandharvas are described in the Atharvavēda (VIII, 6) as braying like an ass (ये शाला: परिनृत्यंति सायं गर्दभनादिन:) and since the donkey is a notoriously lascivious animal it fits in with the erotic character of the Gandharvas (*Indian Culture* vol. III, 1936–37, pp. 613–620). Thi

is not a convincing argument. The Atharva Vēda quoted above clearly distinguishes the Gandharva as a separate class from the Gardabha and A. V. 12, 1, 23 suggests the etymology of the word from Gandha only, apparently on the basis of which the *Śabdakalpadruma* explains the term as गन्धं संगीत वाद्यादि जनितप्रमोदं अर्वति प्राप्नोति इति। To show the common stem in the two words by splitting Gandharva into *Gandhar* + *va* and *Gardhaba* as *Gardha* + *ba* and to think that Gandhar and Gardha are practically identical can not commend themselves to logical thinking. It needs no refutation that the music of the Gandharvas stands no comparison with the braying of the asses. It may be remarked that the Gandharvas as a class are not known to possess a horse-head either from the literature or sculptures, though in lexicons, the word conveys among several other meanings, the sense of a horse. It is only the Kinnara that is definitely described with horse features.

CHAPTER VI

Iconometry of the Gandharva and Kinnara images.

The subject of the measurement of images and proportions of the limbs of gods and demons is dealt with in general in the following works:—

1. Bṛihatsaṁhitā of Varāhamihira, chapt. 58.
2. Vishṇudharmōttarapurāṇam, chapts. 35 & 42.
3. Śukranīti, Chapt. IV.
4. Matsyapurāṇam Chapt. 258.
5. Agnipurāṇam Chapt. 49 etc. Here mostly the iconography of the deities is treated.
6. Pratimāmānalakshaṇam.
7. Mayaśāstram.
8. Śilparatnam.
9. Mānasāra, and
10. Rūpāvalia (quoted by A. K. Coomaraswamy).

They start with fixing a unit of measurement as an *angula* and give specific distances between the various parts of the body and the breadth and length of the limbs, in the case of male as well as female deities. The measurements of the images are spoken of in terms of a *tāla*. A *pratimā*, for instance, may vary in height from three to ten *tālas*. The *Pratimāmānalakshaṇa* lays down that a *tāla* is twelve *angulas* (द्वादशाङ्गुलितालं च). The Vishṇudharmōttara-purāṇam says the same thing in the verse द्वादशाङ्गुल विस्तार स्ताल इत्यभिधीयते (III, 35, 11). According to the Brahmāṇḍapurāṇam a *tāla* implies the distance between the tips of the fully stretched thumb and the middle finger (अङ्गुष्ठस्य प्रदेशिन्या व्यास प्रादेश उच्यते । तालः स्मृतो मध्यमया गोकर्ण श्चाय नामया ॥

According to the *Mānasāra* (chapt. LVIII, v. 6) the Yakshas, the Vidyādharas and such other beings should be measured in the nine *tāla* system. The nine *tāla* system, it may be noted, is adopted generally by all writers on *silpa-śāstra*. The *Mayaśāstram* says that it is the best standard of measurement (उत्तमे नवताले तु) The *Matsyapurāṇam* lays down that the images of gods, demons and Kinnaras should be prepared in the *Nava-tāla* standard (नवताल प्रमाणस्तु देवदानवकिन्नराः ॥ chapt. 258, v. 16) and that the face should measure twelve *aṅgulas* (i. e. one *tāla*) and its measurement should determine the proportions of other limbs

(स्वकीयाङ्गुलि मानेन मुखं स्याद्द्वादशाङ्गुलम् ।
मुखमानेन कर्तव्या सर्वावयव कल्पना ॥ *ibid* v. 19)

While specifying the proportions of the body, the *Vishṇudharmōttarapurāṇam* similarly starts with the statement that the face should measure twelve—*aṅgulas* (द्वादशाङ्गुल परीणाहो मूर्धा).. The *Bṛihatsaṁhitā* of Varāhamihira on the other hand states that the twelve *aṅgulas* of one's own hand, by breadth and fourteen *aṅgulas* by length should be the measurement of the face

(स्वैरङ्गुल प्रमाणैर्द्वादश विस्तीर्णमायतं च मुखम् ।
नग्नजिता तु चतुर्दश दैर्घ्येण द्राविडं कथितम् ॥ chapt. 58, v. 4)

and that this was adopted in the Drāvida country. Thus, according to the *nava-tāla* system which is almost unanimously accepted by the sculptors and artists of India, in preparing the images of the Kinnaras, Vidyādharas etc., the height of the figure would amount to a total of 108 *aṅgulas*

An *aṅgula* is defined in the *Matsyapurāṇam* and *Bṛihatsaṁhitā* in the following verses :—

जालान्तर प्रविष्टानां भानूनां यद्रजः स्फुटम् ।
त्रसरेणुः स विज्ञेयो वालाग्रं तैरथाष्टभिः ॥
तदष्टकेन लिख्या तु यूका लिख्याष्टकैर्मता ।
यवो यूकाष्टकैस्तद्वदष्टभिःस्तैस्तदङ्गुलम् ॥

Matsya : chapt. 258, vv. 17-18.

जालान्तरगे भानौ यदणुतरं दर्शनं रजो याति ।
तद्विद्यात्परमाणुं प्रथमं तद्धि प्रमाणानाम् ॥
परमाणु रजो वालाग्रलिक्षयूका यवोऽङ्गुलं चेति ।
अष्टगुणानि यथोत्तरमङ्गुलमेकं भवति संख्या ॥

Brihatsaṁhitā : chapt. 58. vv. 1–2.

This space of 108 *aṅgulas* is divided into the several parts of the body from foot to the top of the head and the measurements of the various limbs are enumerated in almost all the works on the subject, quoted above.

Instead of the *Tāla* system, the *Vishṇudharmōttarapurāṇam* gives a new terminology for the measurements of the body in painting. It states that the Rishis, the Gandharvas, Daityas and Dānavas with their ministers etc., should be drawn according to the measurement called *Bhadra*. The Kinnaras, Uragas and Rākshasas should be in the *Mālavya* measurement while the Yakshas should be in the *Ruchaka* measurement. (III, chapt. 42, vv. 2–10). The same *Purāṇam* explains these terms in chapt. 35 in the verses (9–11):—

स्वेनैवाङ्गुल मानेन शतमष्टाधिकं भवेत् ।
प्रमाण नृप हंसस्य भद्रस्य तु षडुत्तरम् ॥
चतुर्भिरधिकं ज्ञेयं मालव्यस्य तथा नृप ।
शतं च रुचकस्योक्तं दशोनं शशकस्य च ॥
द्वादशाङ्गुलविस्तारस्ताल इत्यभिधीयते ।

Thus, the *Hamsa* means 108, *Bhadra* 106, *Mālavya* 104, *Ruchaka* 100 and *Śaśaka* 90 *angulas*. According to this work, the Gandharvas should measure 106 *angulas* and the Kinnaras etc., 104 *angulas*. It may be noted that the *Śilparatnam* (Trivandrum Sanskrit series) part II vv. 43–49 lays down that the *nava-tāla* has three varieties called the *uttama*, *Madhyama* and *adhama* of which the *Madhyama* should be adopted in the preparation of the images of the Yakshas and the asura-gaṇa and the *adhama*, of the images of Vidhyādhara etc., The Siddhas, Gandharvas, Pitṛis and Asuras should be in the *ashṭa-tāla* system, whereas

the three *tāla* should be adopted for the figures of the race of the Yakshas and Kinnaras. According to this work the height of the Gandharvas would be 96 *angulas* and that of the Kinnaras would be only 36. This difference in the height is perhaps due to the adoption of different standards by the artists in different localities or to the nature of the subject treated by them.

Lastly, I may draw attention to the measurement of the Kinnara figures given in the Rūpāvaliya Verse 138; Dimensions of Kinnara : " The eyes are five *Kōlaka*, the hair and the crown of them are twelve Kōlaka, the neck, the chest, the navel, the private part, the thigh, the knees, the calf of the leg, the feet, these are three *tāla* " (quoted from the *Mediaeval Simhalese Art*, by A. K. Coomaraswamy. Appendix to chapt. IV). Here the Kōlaka is evidently the Gōlaka of the *Pratimāmānalakshaṇam* where the term is defined to be equal to two *aṅgulas* (द्वादशाङ्गुलिताळं च वितस्तिर्मुखमेव च । ज्ञेयमेकार्थ नामैतद्यङ्गुळं गोलकं कला ॥ २ ॥). Among the group of copper images set up in the temple of Rājarājēśvara at Tanjore, the Kinnara are said to measure four *viṛal* (fingers) i. e. 4 *angulam* from the feet to the hair and the Kinnaris, three *viṛal* i. e. 3 angulas from the feet to the hair (S. I. I. vol. II, No. 50, vv. 6–6). This also shows that the height of the images was subject to the needs of the occasion but in all cases the best principle of the *Matsyapuāṇam* that the limbs should be made proportionate to the face (मुखामानेन कर्तव्या सर्वावयव कल्पना ।) appears to have been adopted by all artists and sculptors in their art productions.

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